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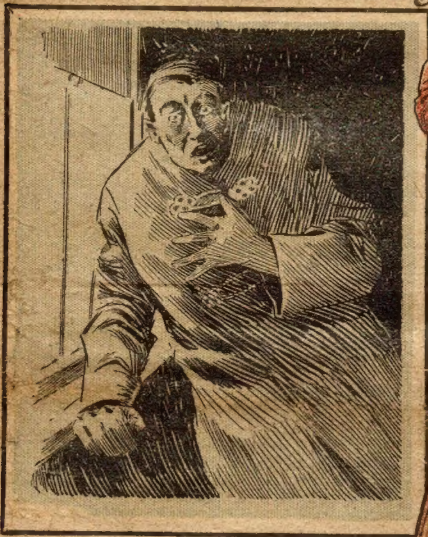
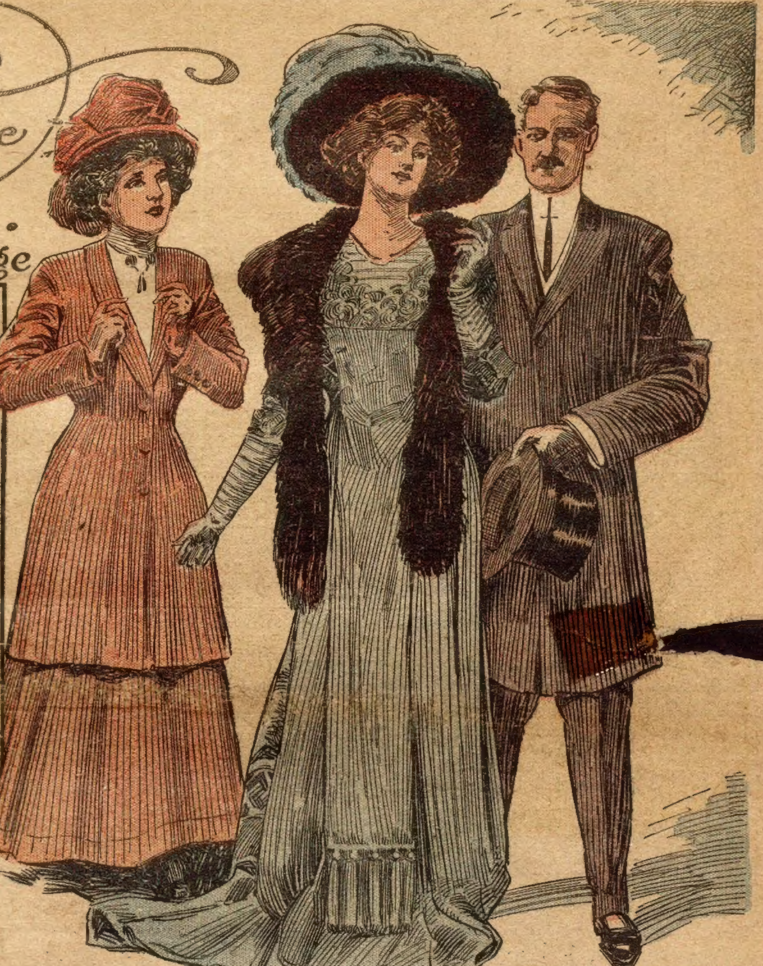
The Voice from the Dead.

or, His Sister's Message





By A. M. FREEMAN

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VINCENT TAYLOR awoke with a start. His heart was beating madly, his body was wet with a cold and clammy perspiration. He rose to a sitting posture, his eyes fixed on the ray of moonlight which filtered its way through a hole in the shade. Sitting thus, he listened breathlessly, but no sound came to him and he sank back again on the pillow.

"I was dreaming!" he murmured half-aloud. "Still that call seemed so real. In spite of all he could do his heart would not quiet, but thumped on in disordered throbbings.

For awhile he lay there, paralyzed by terror; then angry at this weakness, he leaped from his bed with a half-muttered oath, and pulling up the shade, flooded the room with light coming from the full moon, glittering so coldly through the panes. Taylor shivered. The night was bitter cold and that white light on the snow made it appear colder still.

"How pitiless that combination of moonlight and snow," he thought, then wondered why it had never affected him in that way before.

He turned from the window and inspected the room. Nothing had been disturbed. His gold watch lay on the dresser, his clothes had not been touched.

"I was dreaming," he muttered as he lowered the shade.

But the minute he found himself in the dark, his fears returned redoubled, as it were, by the momentary calm. Angry with himself, he cried out: "It beats all, a newly elected sheriff afraid of the dark!" Nevertheless he turned on the light and heedless of the cold of the fireless room, sat down to think.

What was it that had frightened him? It was impossible for him to make this out exactly for while he sought to recall his dream, it vanished from him in the fogs of unreality. All he could distinctly remember was that he had heard his sister's voice faintly calling his name. Mechanically he took up his watch. It indicated half-past twelve.

"I hadn't been asleep long," he said aloud, wishing to hear a human voice. "I retired at twelve, after the supper at the lodge. What did we have that could make a fellow have such a nightmare?"

He tried to figure out the cause of his troubled slumbers, but soon found it could not have come from what he had eaten, for he had often eaten of these same things at night and never been affected. For the first time in his life he felt fear, and what puzzled him the most was that he could not tell that which he feared. But the cold of the room was chilling him to the bone and his teeth began to chatter; so rising, he resolutely put out the light and returned to bed.

For a long time he could not sleep. Though the first awful fear had passed, he was nevertheless oppressed and on the alert. But finally tired nature overcame his wakefulness and he sank into a deep and dreamless sleep.

The light of dawn had replaced that of the moon when he was once more aroused from his slumbers. This time some one was knocking loudly on the door.

"What is it?" he cried, leaping to his feet.

'You're wanted at once at the office, sir. They couldn't make you hear the telephone, it seems," answered the excited voice of his landlady.

"What's up?" and Taylor was getting into his clothes as rapidly as possible.

"Mr. Hilton didn't say. He only stayed a second."

Five minutes later Taylor was running down the deserted streets of the still sleeping town. At the courthouse the under-sheriff met him in the office. One look at the man's face showed Taylor that something of a very serious nature had happened.

"What is it, Hilton?" asked Taylor, still breathless from his hurried walk.

"Come in, Taylor, and stand the blow like a man."

"The blow!" Taylor felt a sinking sensation in his chest as he followed the under-sheriff to the inner office.

At sight of him a young girl, who had been weeping softly, leaped to her feet and with a sobbing cry threw herself in his arms.

"Dora!" he cried. "You here! What has happened?"

The girl could not answer, for overcome by this last emotion she had fainted in his arms.

"My God, Hilton, look! She is dying!"

"No, Taylor, Miss Miller has only fainted. Carry her down to the janitor's quarters. Mrs. Wilkins will know what to do."

Dazed, Taylor obeyed almost without knowing what he was doing. Soon the girl was lying on a bed in the basement, with the janitor's wife busying herself about her, and trying to console the young sheriff, who, kneeling by the bed, was holding one of the girl's cold hands in his as he tenderly called her name.

"It's nothing, Mr. Taylor. She'll be herself again in a few minutes. The shock must have been terrible and the poor child is still so young."

"What shock?" and Taylor arose, those words recalling him to himself.

"Come up to the office and I will tell you," answered the under-sheriff, as he tried to lead Taylor from the room.

"But Dora?" protested the young man.

"I'll take care of her, Mr. Taylor," assured Mrs. Wilkins. "Believe me, sir, it is nothing serious."

"I will send for a doctor nevertheless," and casting one last anxious look at the unconscious girl, Taylor allowed Hilton to lead him from the room. Once in the office above, he telephoned for a physician. Then, turning resolutely to the under-sheriff, he said: "Well, out with it!"

"I scarcely know how to break the news, sir," began Hilton, but his chief cut him short with the words:

"I'm not a woman. What is it?"

"Well, then, your sister, Mrs. Miller, disappeared mysteriously during the night, and so far has not been found."

"My sister!" and a feeling akin to the one of the night before swept over Taylor, making his voice unsteady. "Tell me all," and because his legs quivered beneath his weight he sat down.

"There is but little to tell. Your sister's stepdaughter, Miss Dora, was sent by your brother-in-law to notify you that his wife had left his home some time during the night. He thought it was your night at the courthouse."

"Yes, yes! How did Miller discover her disappearance?"

"It seems Mr. Miller came home late last night"—an angry flash passed through the sheriff's eye at these words—"and that on going to bed he was surprised not to find his wife, though the bed had been slept in and her clothes were still on the chair. He went to bed thinking she would shortly return and fell asleep. Waking up during the night, he was startled to find her place still empty. He got up, searched the house, then the yard. She was nowhere to be found. As her clothing was still in the house, she must have gone off in her nightclothes."

"In her nightclothes! On such a night!" Taylor, shivering, had risen to his feet, his face aged and drawn.

"Mr. Miller and his son are searching the town with the city marshal, and as soon as I heard I sent out the two deputies from here."

"Did she leave a note of explanation?" Taylor's voice sounded strange to his own ears.

"No, sir, not a word. Only young Miller's wheel is missing, and we suppose she rode it off."

"In her nightclothes and riding a wheel! My God! it's awful." The horror of it all left Taylor without strength. He leaned heavily against the wall, while before his mind's eye rose a vivid picture of a white-faced woman with flowing hair and bare feet riding a wheel through the snow in the cold whiteness of that icy moonlit night. And that woman was his sister—a sister, who though only a few years his senior, had been almost a mother. Their own mother had died when both were children, and the father, crushed by the blow, had sunk into a rapid decline, leaving them orphans when his sister was only 19 and he a lad of 12. It was she who had toiled to put him through college, she who had worn out her youth to make him the successful man he was. Four months before he had been elected sheriff, entering on his duties only a few weeks ago. How she had rejoiced in his good fortune, saying her task was accomplished. And now she was—the thought was so heartbreaking that he sank by the desk and wept as only the strong can weep when the blow strikes deep enough to overpower the will.

Hilton looked at him in silence, his own eyes dim. He felt there was nothing to say. The storm had to spend itself, for he knew his chief well enough to be sure this inaction would not last long. He was right. Taylor rose, his face set, his eyes dry, though still red from the tears just shed.

"We must find her," he said resolutely.

"Search-parties are already out, sir."

[illegible] must have others, the whole town [illegible] Remain here, Hilton, we [illegible] telephone when—when she [illegible] found," and Taylor was gone.

At the city hall he found the mayor and a group of excited men all talking at once, giving suggestions and opinions. The minute they saw the young sheriff a death-like silence fell over all. Without looking to see who were in the group, Taylor went directly up to the mayor, saying in tense tones:

"Call out the fire department, Wilson."

"Just the thing! I hadn't thought of that," cried the mayor.

A second later the deep voice of the fire-bell was tolling in the frosty morning air. From all directions the firemen arrived, accompanied by the usual crowd of curious, which in a small town welcomes the least possibility of excitement. Search-parties under the organizing hand of the young sheriff were sent out in every direction, while the news of the supposed tragedy spread like wildfire through the town, leaving consternation in many hearts, for Mrs. Miller was beloved by all who knew her. Soon business men arrived with their carriages asking if they could help by searching the country roads, men came on horseback, boys on wheels, until the little city seemed to be transformed into a metropolis, so great was the excitement and movement on its usually quiet streets.

While the men were out hunting for some trace of the missing Mrs. Miller, the women over back-yard fences discussed the disappearance and its probable issue. Many were the whispered hints or outspoken remarks, blaming the husband with whatever might have happened. On one point all agreed, however—that only the most intense despair could have led so good a Christian as Mrs. Miller to take her life. If she was dead, and there was no doubt but that she was, her husband's conduct must in some way have pushed her to it.

All morning the pall of suspense hung over the little city, in spite of the merry rays of the sun as they danced and played on the rapidly melting snow. By eleven, however, one of the search-parties found a broken wheel on the roadside near the river. Some one recognized it as belonging to Jack Miller. The unfortunate woman could not be far away, if it were true she had taken the wheel. A closer search followed along the banks of the almost soldidly frozen stream. Half an hour later the slow tolling of the fire-bell announced that the body had been found. In a second excitement ran wild, people rushed from all directions to the city hall, eager for news, while the telephone office was flooded with calls of inquiry.

This was the story brought back by those who had found the body. It lay beneath the bridge which spans the river on the east. In several places along the bank it was evident by the footprints on the snow that the poor woman was seeking to find a place where she could break through the ice. Failing to do so she had finally gone to the bridge, had leaped over the railing, and falling on the hard ice below had broken the spinal column where the head joins the spinal column had been instantaneous. There was something pitiful in the persistence with which the poor woman had sought death. She had slipped on an old coat of her husband's over her white gown and put on a pair of man's shoes which fully accounted for the tracks in the snow along the bank, which at first had led them to suspect foul play.

It was an hour later at the morgue in the coroner's office, where the body had been taken, that husband and brother met. Both looked haggard, but the looks which they exchanged showed the difference of their feelings, the husband lowering his eyes in guilty remorse, the brother flashing his on the shrinking man with despairing rage and hate. The two men had been left alone with their dead for a few seconds, and Taylor said between set teeth: "Behold your work, coward!"

Miller started back in sudden terror, his bloodshot eyes staring from the dead to the living in an almost insane look, while he stammered: "My work! What do you mean?"

"You know very well what I mean, you broke her heart and forced her to that act of madness." Then breaking down completely he cried to the dead woman, "Oh, Mary, why did you marry him against my wish!"

It was true. Two years before, when Mary Taylor had told her brother she intended marrying John Miller, Taylor had tried every thing in his power to dissuade her from doing so, though at the same time he was engaged to marry Miller's daughter, and Jack Miller was his best friend—almost a brother. But the unhappiness of the first wife who had died of a broken heart, the fast life Miller had led since, was ample cause for a brother who loved his sister, to refuse his consent to let her risk her happiness in the keeping of such a man.

But Mary loved him. He had such winning ways, besides the girl was lonely, she was fast passing her prime, her mirror told her her beauty was fading and Vincent for whom she had sacrificed her life, was about to marry. She would be alone, and the lot of the old maid, always a third party in another's home, frightened her. So, in spite of her brother's protest and the advice of her friends, she married Miller.

For awhile it looked as though this marriage would cause a break between Dora Miller and Vincent Taylor, the daughter resenting her lover's objections to her father's marrying his sister. But Mary, who was a perfect stepmother, soon patched up the quarrel, and the engagement continued, with the understanding that the marriage would take place as soon as Dora graduated.

The days passed, and to the outer world, Mary seemed perfectly happy. If she knew of her husband's conduct she did not let any one guess it. There was much talk about Miller, but as is always the case, the near members of the family were the last to hear of it, and it had been only recently that Taylor had become aware that his brother-in-law's name was coupled with that of gay divorcee in a manner not at all favorable to Miller. But Mary seemed so perfectly happy, Miller in his home was so devoted, that the young man thought the story was merely the result of the usual gossip of a small town, which coupled the name of the woman client with that of the lawyer who had assisted her to get a divorce from her husband. Now, in the midst of his security the blow had fallen. Mary was dead, revealing by that suicide how much the proud woman must have suffered in silence.

The next two days Taylor passed as in a dream. During the nights he paced his room unable to sleep, haunted by the memory of that call in the night which had so terrified him. Had Mary, ere she took the fatal leap into the river, called out his name, and had he heard her voice? A superstitious fear, one he could not explain and which he would have been ashamed to own, made him fight against sleep. It was as if he feared that the minute he lost himself in slumber something terrible would be revealed to him.

The coroner's jury returned a verdict of suicide committed in a fit of temporary insanity brought on by a weakened condition of the nervous system. On the afternoon of the second day the funeral took place. Taylor was relieved to hear that Dora was too ill to attend. He could not understand why, but much as he loved the girl, he did not want to see her. Was it that he feared to see her consoling her father, this man he held responsible for the tragedy? He could not tell. Jack Miller's conduct however surprised him. Though he had had no words with his brother-in-law after the first outbreak, Jack seemed to avoid him. Not once did the young man speak to him, not one word of sympathy had he offered, yet they had been friends, almost brothers. Red-eyed and pale, Jack did not leave his father's side, and Taylor in the bitter misery of the moment, longed for some words of consolation from his friend, but they came not. How terribly alone he felt! For the first time he realized just what place the dead woman had filled in his life. After the first outburst, which had followed the hearing of the news, he had not shed a tear, but like an automaton he had gone through the trying hours of those terrible two days.

The funeral over, Taylor returned to the office, afraid to find himself alone, but the minute Hilton spied him, he cried out: "Get out of here and go to bed. You look like a ghost. We won't need you for a week."

Taylor wanted to object, but as he could not tell of his fears, he yielded to Hilton's wishes and returned to his rooms. His landlady met him in the hall. "I'll bring your supper to your room, Mr. Taylor," she said, as he passed her with a weary bow.

"Thank you," he answered. "You're very kind."

He staggered half-blindly up the stairs, only dimly hearing the landlady call after him. "The postman left a letter and a package for you. You'll find them on the table."

He did not answer, but continued on his way, his strength leaving him now that the nervous tension was over. He sank overcome on a chair and for a long time remained motionless, too spent to even think. This rest calmed him and after a time he roused himself. Remembering what the landlady had called up to him about the letter and the package, he arose, went to the table, took both up and walked to the window to better see, for night was descending rapidly. He started as he saw the handwriting. It was from Dora. He opened the envelope and read:

"Dear Vincent: It was not to be. I return under separate cover you ring and the other tokens of our love. Don't seek to know my reasons for I can never tell you. Pity me! This is breaking my heart. Don't try to see me again. Be generous and set me free without a question. I love you and will always love you, but a marriage between us is impossible. Forgive and forget. I can write no more. Good-by forever.

"DORA."

The letter dropped from Taylor's nerveless fingers, and he remained stunned by this new blow. He tried to think, but his brain, numbed by grief, lack of sleep, and too little nourishment, refused to work. He tore open the package, and there, among the simple presents he had given Dora during the two years of their engagement, was a tiny box. He pressed the clasp, the cover flew open, and on the white satin lining before him lay the betrothal ring. He sat looking at the circle of glittering gold too bewildered to suffer much, too weak to try to understand. The only thing which came clearly to him was that Dora was lost to him, and he suffered in a dull sort of a way.

He was aroused by a knock at the door. He arose painfully, threw the various objects and the letter into a drawer, turned on the light and opened the door. It was the landlady with his supper. He had scarcely eaten during the past two days, and he was surprised to find that he was now ravenously hungry. He ate what was set before him almost without knowing what he was doing. Mrs. Davis watched him with satisfaction, for she knew the food would help calm the young man's unrest. When he had finished, she said as she took up the tray:

"Take my advice, Mr. Taylor and go to bed immediately. Sleep is what you need most now."

"I guess I will," he answered dully.

Once alone he acted on the suggestion received, undressed, and went to bed. His exhaustion was so complete he fell asleep at once.

The clock in the parlor below was chiming midnight throughout the silent house when Vincent Taylor sat up in bed breathing hard. He had heard his sister's voice calling him. Again it came—the whispered breath—calling: "Vincent!"

"Mary!" he answered, his terror leaving him, as a sense of calm, almost happiness, stole over his troubled spirit.

He did not pause to think that Mary was dead and that she could not thus call him from the grave. He answered simply as a matter of course, as he had always done.

"Vincent," the voice continued, "I did not kill myself. He killed me. Don't blame him, though, it was not his fault. We quarreled. I was insane with jealousy and I tried to stab him with a knife. In defending himself he pushed me from him. I fell, and in falling broke the backbone, dying instantly. Dora knows the truth, and for that reason she has broken her engagement with you, but I do not want it thus. She is the woman for you. Don't let my death stand between you and happiness. Marry her in spite of all. I wish it thus. Good-by."

The voice ceased. Taylor called softly in the darkness, but not the slightest whisper answered him. He shook himself. No, he was not dreaming. He was sitting up, his eyes wide open. Had Mary, ever mindful of his happiness, returned from the dead to save him from a separation from the woman he loved?

Sleep was now impossible, and the rest of the night he worried over the problem. The more he thought, the surer he became that the ghostly voice had told the truth—John Miller had killed his wife. With the first rays of dawn Taylor was up and dressed. He must know. By seven he was ringing the bell of the Miller home. Miller himself opened the door. Dora and Jack were still asleep. He started back at the sight of the white, haggard face of his visitor.

"I wish to see you alone," announced Taylor, as he entered.

"You can. Jack and Dora are still sleeping. Come."

Miller showed the way to the parlor where the casket had stood the day before. Taylor shivered at the recollection; then he broke forth unable to control himself any longer: "Out with the truth! You killed her!"

Miller fell back on a chair as though shot, while he hoarsely demanded: "My God! How do you know?"

"Then it is so!" and Taylor started back as much horrified as the guilty man.

Pleadingly Miller cried: "Don't judge until you know. Let me explain. It is awful, awful!" and the wretched man wrung his hands in an agony of grief.

"I am listening." Taylor was surprised at his own calm, wondering why he did not kill on the spot the man who had just avowed he had murdered his sister.

Miller rose to his feet, and like a criminal before a judge began in a voice broken with despair: "Taylor, I loved her! God only knows how much!"

"You loved her, yet Mrs. Winters was your mistress! Tell it to another!"

"The sin of my youth, Taylor! Mrs. Winters and I had been lovers during my first marriage and while she was still living with her husband. When my first wife died, she had me secure a divorce for her from Winters, with the understanding that we would be married as soon as she was free. Meanwhile I had learned to love Mary and that love proved stronger than my reason. I married your sister, knowing that Mrs. Winters would never forgive me and would do all in her power to wreck my happiness."

He paused. Taylor ordered: Go on."

"From the day of my second marriage Mrs. Winters has haunted my life with threats, many a time forcing me through fear of exposure into appointments which caused talk and aroused your sister's jealousy. But what was I to do? You know Mary—upright, honorable, but so narrow in her views of right and wrong. I feared if I told her the truth to lose her love, so I let that woman weave around me her network of vengeance. The night of the tragedy she had me meet her at the Oxford where she was stopping."

He paused. Taylor ordered: "Go on." did not urge him on. After awhile Miller resumed:

"She kept me until near midnight; then, as I was leaving, she told me with a heartless laugh that my wife knew of the meeting, as well as the whole story of the past, and that she would put an entirely different construction on this midnight visit than the reality. I hastened home in alarm, fearing the worst, but I found Mary in bed and as I thought asleep."

Miller's face was terrible to behold, so contracted and livid it was. His voice was jerked and tense, each word tearing the throat with a guttural sound, telling of the repressed sobs which almost choked him. But he continued:

"I undressed, then I became aware that Mary was looking at me from under her half-closed lids, watching all of my movements. I guessed the agonies she must be enduring, so I decided to make a clean breast of it without delay. The minute I began to speak, she sprang from the bed like a mad creature, a knife glittering in her hand. Jealousy and outraged love had driven her insane. She threw herself on me, trying to strike. I tried to ward off the blows by pushing her from me. She lost her balance and fell against the wall between the bed and the dresser, her head twisted to one side. As she struck, a sinister sound like the snapping of a bone echoed through the room, she murmured your name, then lay still!"

"Then it was so! I did hear her call!"

Miller did not hear this remark, for breaking down completely, he had fallen on a chair, his head in his hands, and rocking back and forth he was sobbing madly. After a time he looked up and continued brokenly:

"She was dead, Vincent. That cracking of bone had been the snapping of the spinal column. I called for help. Dora and Jack came. I told them how the accident had happened. Then, Taylor, followed a scene of despair. Those two children loved her as a mother, and their despair was almost greater than mine. I wanted to have you called, but they would not let me. No one was to know the truth. We must hide the unintentional crime. Her death must be a suicide, nothing more. Together they thought out the means of saving me. I was too crushed to think. It was Jack who thought of the river. When every detail was settled, we left Dora alone at the house and started off with the body on which Dora had insisted on putting one of my coats and a pair of shoes of her brother's, though we knew she could not feel the cold. To aid us with the body we took Jack's wheel, one of us riding it with the body balanced before him, the other holding her on."

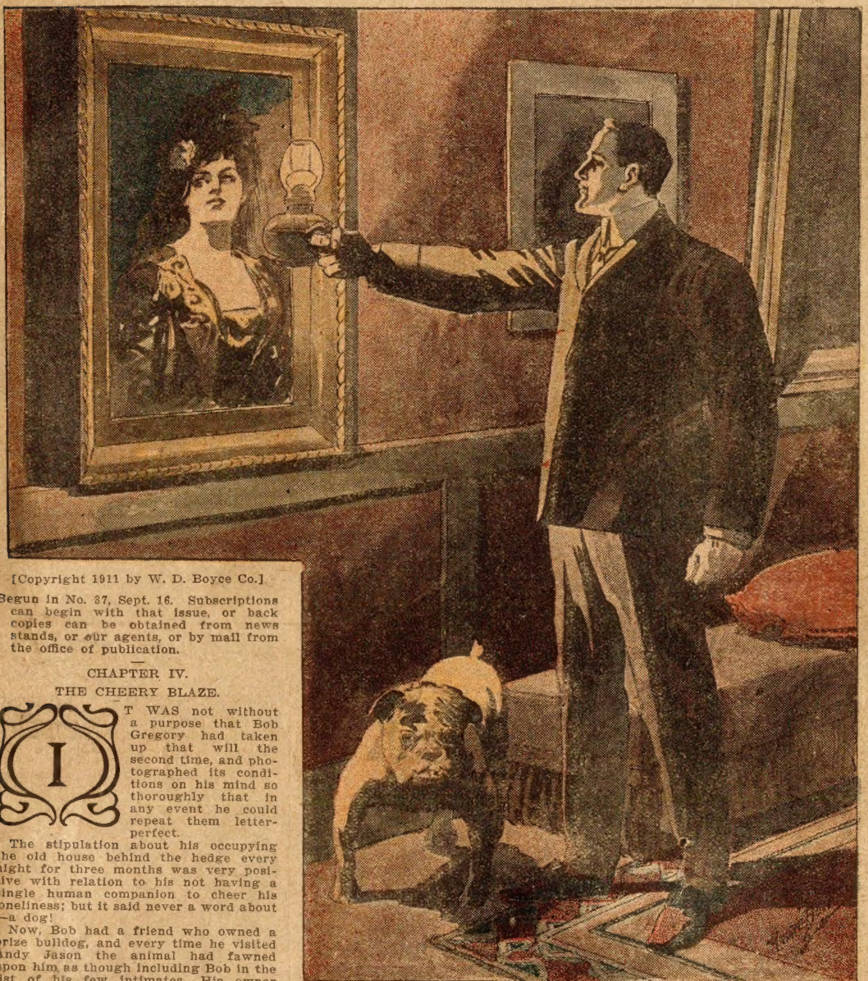
"My God!" broke from Taylor in horror.

(Continued on page seventeen.)

THE LUCK OF GREGORY;

Or, A Rocky Road to Fortune

By JULIAN F. DARROW



"Whew! I don't wonder the old boy was fascinated."

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CHAPTER IV.

THE CHEERY BLAZE.

IT WAS not without a purpose that Bob Gregory had taken up that will the second time, and photographed its conditions on his mind so thoroughly that in any event he could repeat them letter-perfect.

The stipulation about his occupying the old house behind the hedge every night for three months was very positive with relation to his not having a single human companion to cheer his loneliness; but it said never a word about—a dog!

Now, Bob had a friend who owned a prize bulldog, and every time he visited Andy Jason the animal had fawned upon him as though including Bob in the list of his few intimates. His owner had expressed more or less surprise over this action on the part of the blue-ribbon beast, for as a rule Ajax was mighty chary about making acquaintances, and on the whole was not a prepossessing beast for children to fondle. Never mind, he would be just the chap to make things seem cheerful in a lonely old mansion at the ghostly hour of midnight; and accordingly to Jason Bob hied away.

Of course the other was a newspaper man, for Bob really knew only this type of fellows; and it may as well be stated right here that Ajax being valued at a clean five hundred had never been purchased by its present owner, but came to him as a present from a wealthy patron who killed two birds with one stone, canceling a long standing obligation and obliging a timid wife at the same time.

Jason had more than once turned the office upside down when he sauntered in with that huge squatty beast; if prizes are given for sheer ugliness then Ajax surely deserved the gold medal, since he was the most hideous dog Bob had ever set eyes on; but it would appear that such is fame among animals of his particular breed.

When Andy had heard all the particulars of the remarkable story he at first feared his friend had gone "dotty," and was imagining these weird things; so Bob had to fetch out that letter from the firm and let the other read it; but when he flashed a tight little wad of yellowboys before Andy's nose, the latter grinned amiably—there could no longer be any any doubt, for never had Bob Gregory been known to possess more than one twenty at a time, and precious few times at that.

"I've heard some rumors along this line, but thought the boys were joshing. Of course you can borrow Ajax, and a hundred times welcome. Jove! that beast will set his teeth good and tight in the leg of any ghostly visitor you may have, bet your life, old fellow. What time will you call for him?" he demanded, shaking Bob's hand like a pump handle in his exuberance of good feeling.

"Well, I expect to go up along about ten, so as to get the hang of things before my time really begins, you know. As you're working on the afternoon sheet now, perhaps there's a chance of your being home?"

"Depend on it. Look for you by ten at the latest. You'll have to take a taxi or a cab, for they'll never let you lug that beaut in the subway or on the L. However, what does that matter to a man of unlimited wealth. Gee! how I envy you old chap; but you deserve it all right, and I wish you joy."

So, at about a quarter before ten that night, Bob rolled up to the door of the bachelor apartment house where Andy held forth—by rights he should have occupied cheaper lodgings, but found difficulty in connection with getting permission for Ajax to stop along with him; and here the bars were down, so that anything went.

The animal seemed more than usually fond of Bob on this night, and it was apparent on the face of it that there would be no trouble in getting the bull to his destination.

Around his massive neck he wore a stout collar, and to this was attached a steel link chain calculated to hold a horse—at least that was what Andy declared as he handed it over to his friend.

"Keep him just as long as you wish. I can run up with you a week or two later and see him. If no man is allowed to step inside that confounded house, why, then you see you can fetch the beaut outside and let him smell of me. George! now, I wouldn't like him to quite forget me, and try to seize a chunk out of my leg. As to the accommodation, forget it. Truth to tell the beggar was just about bankrupting me with his meat bill, for he eats like a tiger. Keep him constantly chained, feed him as per the written directions, and if you are beset by burglars or ghosts give him just one show for his money—he won't fail you. Good-by, old boy."

Then Bob found himself approaching the district where the old Gregory mansion was standing, a landmark among more modern surroundings; Ajax seemed to quite enjoy this night ride, and sat on the seat of the taxi, squinting out of the window at the passing show; for in addition to his other amiable qualifications the animal's eyes had a cross-bar effect that was enough to give one the shivers unless used to the glare of those strabismus-cursed orbs.

When they came to a halt in front of a hedge that stood before a high fence Bob jumped out with the prize beauty, holding grimly to the chain, paid the relieved chauffeur his legal fee and then some; after which he sought entrance to the grounds. Passing through a gate he found himself facing the gloomy building that was to be his nightly home for three long months.

In spite of his assurance and boasted freedom from superstition Bob could not help feeling one or two little chills race up and down his spinal column, though he immediately laughed in disdain at the idea of there being anything about the situation to daunt him.

Ajax pulled hard upon the chain, and apparently wanted to go in, which Bob was pleased to consider a good sign. He had come prepared with a supply of matches, and as soon as he managed to get the massive front door open—with many creaks and groans which he calculated to soon stop by a liberal use of oil—he struck a light.

It was a wide hall he stood in, with broad stairs leading to the upper part of the house; and the first thought that struck Bob was the strange fact that though this mansion had practically been empty for many years no one had been bold enough to burglarize the same; for even in the hall he saw a host of things that surely would have brought considerable of the filthy lucre to a pillager.

There must be a reason for this exemption; could it be possible that the stories about the house being haunted had circulated in the quarters of the "submerged ten," and that superstition was a far better guardian than a cordon of police would have been?

The thought was not very pleasant to the man whom circumstances compelled to do what even the hope of great gain had not been able to tempt reckless thieves to attempt; but Bob was not going to let any such thought give him a minute's uneasiness thus early in the campaign.

Out of his pocket he pulled the stub of a candle, to which he applied the flame of the match; then he closed the door behind him, turned the key in the lock, and walked toward the stairs, intending to fasten Ajax to the great newel-post until such time as he could decide what to do with him.

It was with more or less curiosity that Bob walked around that floor of the house, using his candle to peer at the conglomeration of furniture and knick-knacks that cluttered the rooms; for it was evident that when the family moved to their elegant mansion downtown on Lexington avenue they abandoned the greater part of the lares and penates that had become associated with the home place. Perhaps that was why the old man had loved to spend much of his time here, for these things must appeal to his memory of the past—but that was part of the mystery Bob hoped to solve sooner or later.

Presently, having seen as much as he wished, he unfastened the dog, and was promptly dragged upstairs by the eager beast, seemingly as much consumed by curiosity as a human being might have been.

Just as below, the upper floor was filled with a multitude of furniture, and in addition curios that surprised Bob; for while he had but a scant education along that particular line he felt that some of these things must be worth considerable. The house was cut up in rather a peculiar pattern, being quite different from the regulation dwelling with its hall in the center and rooms opening on either side. Here the apartments ran into each other, and one could actually get bewildered in the maze until custom gave a clew to the puzzle.

Speedily the anxious Bob discovered the spot where he was supposed to hold forth; there was the grate filled with wood, and a supply in a basket close at hand for further use; near by stood a comfortable lounge that would serve admirably for a sleeping-place, while a big easy-chair invited company, being within arm's length of a writing desk.

On a little table was a lamp ready for use, and being desirous of dispelling the awful gloom that hung over the place Bob immediately accepted the mute invitation and applied one of his matches to the wick.

The result was pleasing, for a mild glow was diffused throughout the alcove, and things immediately took on a more benevolent aspect; even Ajax wagged his stump of a tail, and actually glared his appreciation.

Continuing the good work Bob now started the fire; if he had to hold the fort in this ghost-ridden mansion for long weeks there was no reason why he should not enjoy at least some of the comforts that go with an abundance of cash; and Mr. Hogg had assured him that plenty of fuel had been put in the capacious cellars.

This was something like; and having chained the bow-legged demon to a leg of the couch, where he could have the run of the near vicinity, Bob threw himself down on the wide-reaching chair and began to consider. It was rather different this experiencing the reality, instead of the mere anticipation, and he was surprised at the multitude of thoughts that immediately began to chase through his brain, doubtless brought into being by his strange surroundings.

Here no doubt the old man used to sit gazing into the fire just as he was now doing, and dreaming his dreams. Perhaps it was in this very spot he conceived the idea of having Alexander's son and heir keep watch and ward in the old house, for what? Ah! that was where Bob drew up every time, and a blank wall arose before him which he could not scale; still, he was enlisted in the fight, and time would perhaps lift the veil.

One thing seemed sure—Robert Carberry Gregory must have learned in some way that his son Alexander had a boy, else these preparations would not have been made; no doubt he scorned the effeminate son of his only daughter as one wholly incapable of carrying out the peculiar schedule he had in mind, calculated to prove something as a fact or fiction, and hoped for a more manly representative on the other side of the house—for which, thanks.

If only he had a clew with which to build a theory Bob felt that it would not be so hard; but as it was, how could he escape the conviction that this whole escapade must be but a whim of a diseased mind?

The fire crackled merrily, Ajax settled down to enjoy a nap in the cozy atmosphere of his new quarters, and Bob, beginning to think it incumbent upon him to discover the time register, so as to record the fact of his being on hand at the beginning of his long vigil, started up, and casting his eyes around soon found what he sought, read the directions, gave the required turn that would do the business and then dropped back in his easy-chair for a smoke.

He had just applied the match to his pipe when he made a peculiar discovery that aroused his interest.

CHAPTER V.

CARAMINTA'S PLAY.

Doubtless it had been a long time since this little alcove retreat had been illuminated as it was just then; during the daytime one might even lie upon the couch and not be able to note the fact that there were certain consecutive marks or characters drawn upon the face of the bricks under the wooden mantel. Bob craned his neck and peering closer was able to make out the writing, which may have been done with a bit of charcoal, for it was black and uneven.

And this was what he read in that irregular scroll:

"To R——: Look in desk——secret drawer back——all made clear——act as think best!"

There was no signature but he could of course understand that it was the trembling hand of old Robert which had traced those rude letters there some years back; and so far as he knew his were the first eyes to discover them.

Perhaps the old man knew they must remain unseen until a fire was made in his favorite grate, and a lamp lighted in the alcove. Bob began to feel that strange things were beginning to work already, and with this clear message from the dead to direct operations, perhaps the cover of the mystery would be lifted before long.

Who was R.? Could it be possible that his grandfather ever knew that the boy of his disinherited son had been named after him, and meant this communication as a personal letter of advice?

Why not, when he had already come to the conclusion that the old man had kept tab on the doings of Alexander, for a time, at least? Well, suppose it were intended for him, why should he not take up the gauntlet that was thrown down and proceed to pry into matters right away?

A secret drawer sounded good to him, and he calculated that it must contain certain documents bearing upon the case, that the old gentleman intended him to set eyes on, since he gave explicit instructions for him to use his judgment about what was to follow—that is, as Bob took it, whether he might deem it best to publish his discoveries to the world or hide the secret forever.

Now that his attention was particularly directed to the desk, he saw that it was not one of the usual modern affairs, but had evidently been constructed especially for the niche it occupied.

Ajax growled as he sprang up from his seat, and Bob hurriedly spoke a few words to quiet the ugly beast, for he had completely forgotten his presence.

The keys were in the drawers and thus he found it easy to open any part of the desk; it contained writing materials and various other things, evidently rummaged over by those in the employ of the legal gentlemen who had managed the settlement of the estate; the thought occurred to Bob that undoubtedly it must have been a condition of the other will, under which the De Peysters came into possession, that this old house was to be left severely alone, at least for a term of years, with all its sacred reminders of the past.

He immediately began to look in the back part of the desk, after taking out all the drawers; but for a time it baffled him, not being experienced in such solving of enigmas and the locating of hidden receptacles. But, as has been said before, Bob had inherited a fair portion of that Gregory stubbornness, which, of course, he called determination, and having a tip that a secret drawer did actually exist, he was bent on finding the same if he had to take a hatchet and smash the whole desk to flinders.

By lighting his stub of a candle again, and inserting it in the yawning cavity left when the big drawer was dislodged, he finally made out that there was some sort of projection away back where it did not appear necessary; and thrusting in his hand he was able to drag out a little drawer that just seemed to fit beyond the main one.

Flushed with victory he threw himself into the chair to get his breath, and at the same time Ajax once more growled ominously, as though he did not comprehend all these peculiar actions; so Bob had to suspend business just at this interesting stage in order to soothe the monster, and pat him affectionately on the top of his square head, an operation that caused the beast to whine and glare up into the face of his new master in what was intended to be his most affectionate manner.

Then Bob turned his eyes upon the little wooden compartment which he held across his knees; at least it was not entirely empty, for he saw an envelope in one corner, which, from its bulk, evidently contained several sheets of paper.

It was with strange emotions that Bob took this up, and opened it, for he knew to a certainty that it had been left there by his grandfather, whom he had never even seen, and possibly intended for his very hand. The writing was crabbed, and just what might be expected from one whose fingers were shaky with age; but Bob was accustomed to deciphering worse chirography than that, and he anticipated having little trouble.

Even the first words aroused his curiosity, and he read on with increasing interest to the very finish, when he fell back with a big sigh, immediately to fasten his eyes upon the picture in the cracked gold frame that hung on the wall nearby, and which he had already determined must be the dead millionaire himself—a face that somehow, in spite of its sternness, had much of human interest to hold one's attention, for it represented a man who had fought against strong obstacles in climbing the ladder to wealth.

"So, that is what it's all about? He carried a secret about with him for the last few years of his life, and dared not whisper it even as he lay dying, for fear of ridicule from his daughter. The poor old chap, it quite turned his head, I guess, and accounts for many things he did that gave him the name of being a bit off his base. H'm, well, he's cut out a pretty job for me now, watching for spirits to visit this nook again. By Jove! It certainly adds piquancy to the affair, all right, though I don't really believe there's the least danger of my having a visitor during the term of my vigil. But this is a most mournful document; I don't remember ever doing anything as strong myself in my palmy days of romancing. Spanish governess, eh? And roped the old fellow in by means of spiritualism, too. Well, he wasn't the first poor old fool to be caught that way, I guess. Let me read it again just as he wrote it down in his solemn way, as if he were inditing a last will and testament."

This is what Bob read, occupying the several sheets of stiff paper that crackled as he turned the pages over in his grasp:

"She seemed to have an influence over me that was incomprehensible, from the very first day she came as a governess to Amelia's children. I did not believe I should ever again feel the touch of emotion, but when Caraminta's black eyes looked into mine I appeared to realize that there was a strange affinity of soul between us. At the time I had begun to investigate spiritualism, and when by accident I learned that she was a medium it gave me much joy. Together we were wont to receive messages from the dear ones above, and I learned much of the mysterious power that had been manifested in this remarkable woman. By degrees she began to seem a part of my very life, and I found myself leaning on her more and more, until when she talked of leaving us for another city I could not bear the thought of separation, and proposed that she marry me. Accordingly we were wed, and came here to live, where malicious tongues could not find cause for comment. It was Caraminta's wish that our union be kept a secret for a time, though I confess I too, dreaded having Amelia know, for she is subject to hysterics. And here we lived for months, I in a fool's paradise perhaps, believing that an old man could fill a place in a young woman's heart; still it was very, very pleasant, and often we would converse with the spirits of those who had gone before, since the loneliness around us seemed peculiarly fitting for these solemn manifestations.

"But it did not last, though the blow fell sooner than I had ever anticipated. It was my habit to come up here for some days at a time, and then spend a short period with my kin in the palace which I detested. And one day when I came, alas, there was no one to welcome me, only a cruel note on this desk telling me that the 'game was played out,' that Caraminta had fled with the only man she had ever loved, a Spaniard like herself, and named De Gama, and that I need never expect to see her again in the flesh; but, she added, that she had not forgotten the sacred promise we had exchanged many times, and that if she passed away before my time came she would positively appear to me here by this same fire, and manifest herself in a way that could not be mistaken.

"I was an old man when the blow fell, but I did not forget how necessary it was that the world should never know of this escapade, for the sake of Amelia and her little flock; so I buried the story in my poor racked heart, and since that hour I have sat here by my lonely fire many, many times waiting for a sign; for I felt, I knew that if so be she was taken from this life while I still lived, she would come back again and again to renew association with this corner where we so often sat and communed with the bright beings of the celestial world.

"Once she came, and once only. I shall never forget that night, whether I live months or years. She did not look like an angelic visitor, for her face was filled with unutterable woe, and I knew that she must still be suffering for the sins done in the body. I saw her plainly over there under the Oriental portiere, one hand gripping the tapestry in a frenzied way, and the other held out toward me as if appealing for help. I staggered to my feet, believing she had indeed returned to me in the flesh, and tottered forward to take her in my arms; but when I would have encircled her form she seemed to melt away into vapor, and I heard only a faint cry far down the stairs; so I knew from that that Caraminta was dead, and that, as she had promised, her spirit had visited me; but she had agreed to come again and again until we were in complete accord and able to converse. It was the supreme test to which we had committed ourselves by a vow, and which was to prove the truth or falsity of our belief.

"So I have come here many times, yet the weary months glide by and the spirit of my Caraminta does not appear; but I know she will come when permitted, though perhaps when I am far away in the unknown world searching for her; and it is with a view to telling her this that I am now making these preparations looking to the time when I may not be here to greet her gentle spirit.

"If she sees this fire burning, and this nook occupied it may influence her to come again; should it be so I beg and entreat of you to communicate with her, and in some manner inform her that I, too, have been called, and that if she search she will find me in some portion of the vast unknown land of the blest. I place this simple little story of my later life in this secret drawer, hoping that it may fall into the hands of the one appointed by destiny to carry out my last wishes, and resting firm in the conviction that if there is anything worth believing in the ability of departed spirits to return to earth and converse with those of us here who are given the power to control, Caraminta will some time within these three months show herself to you, a Gregory! So thinking, I sign myself here,

"ROBERT CARBERRY GREGORY."

And Bob, as he finished reading this remarkable scroll for the second time shook his head sadly and muttered: "Poor old chap. It's very evident that she had him bewitched, and meant to make a big play for his money; only that this old Spanish lover appeared on the scene, and the call of the heart was too much for the schemes of the brain. But as to her spirit visiting me here in this snug little den, well, permit me to say I doubt it; but nevertheless it makes a fellow feel a little queer, reading such a communication amid such surroundings. Ugh! hear the wind rattle that shutter!"

CHAPTER VI.

UNDER THE SPELL.

Even the valiant bulldog, Ajax, seemed uneasy under the peculiar conditions governing their occupancy of the house behind the hedge, for as the shutter began a doleful series of rattling sounds, influenced by the shift of the March night wind, he raised his square head and growled in a bloodthirsty way that was enough to strike terror into the heart of any intruder.

"That's another thing I shall have to do during some daylight hour—go around and fasten every shutter so that it can't wiggle-waggle all night long; for if there's one thing I detest it's the nerve-racking creaking and groaning of blinds that are loose. And by jove! it sounds doubly irritating when a fellow is locked up in a place like this. Heigho! I'm afraid the time is going to hang rather heavy on my hands between now and the release period," and reaching out for his tobacco pouch, which he had deposited on the little table, Bob proceeded to charge his pipe once more.

Lying back in a comfortable position he pondered over the situation.

After all, why complain?

Taking it at its worst this was a thousand times preferable to those wretched night vigils at his boarding-place, when he had tried to imagine what sort of shelter he could find if dispossessed from his room for want of rent money. Why, he was lodged under his very own rooftree now! That should be novelty enough to give him pause when finding fault.

So he began to go over the whole game again, and through the curling wreaths of blue smoke wonder what this strange woman witch who had bedeviled his ancestor so thoroughly might be like; for that same Caraminta seemed to hold the center of the stage in this mixed-up affair, since it had been around her the whole adventure revolved.

And as he was thus pondering, in a half-dreamy condition of mind, as a fellow will occasionally when he puffs lazily at his pipe and sees visions in the ascending incense, Bob became aware of

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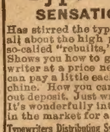

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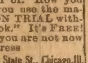

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"We had never used Postum till last spring when father brought home a package one evening just to try it. We had heard from our neighbors, and in fact everyone who used it, how well they liked it.

"Well, the next morning Mother brewed it about five minutes, just as she had been in the habit of doing with coffee without paying special attention to the directions printed on the package. It looked weak and didn't have a very promising color, but nevertheless father raised his cup with an air of expectancy. It certainly did give him a great surprise, but I'm afraid it wasn't a very pleasant one, for he put down his cup with a look of disgust.

"Mother wasn't discouraged though, and next morning gave it another trial, letting it stand on the stove till boiling began and then letting it boil for fifteen or twenty minutes, and this time we were all so pleased with it that we have used it ever since.

"Father was a confirmed dyspeptic and a cup of coffee was to him like poison. So he never drinks it any more, but drinks Postum regularly. He isn't troubled with dyspepsia now and is actually growing fat, and I'm sure Postum is the cause of it. All the children are allowed to drink it and they are perfect pictures of health." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Read the little book, "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs. "There's a Reason."

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.

* * *

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"It is mighty hard," said an unfortunate workingman some time ago to the writer, "to save up a thousand dollars by laying aside a dollar or two a week and then to take it out of the savings bank and lose it to a get-rich-quick swindler, as I have just done." This poor fellow could work and save, but he had not had even a kindergarten education in finance, else his story would have been different. He had never given a thought to interest and so was absolutely ignorant of growth through compound interest, and of course had never heard of that wonderful process of accumulation known as "progressive compound interest."

One dollar deposited in a savings bank that pays 4 per cent will amount to $2.19 in twenty years. This is simple compound interest. Now if you deposit $1 every year for twenty years, or $20 in all, the sum to your credit will have grown to $30.97. Any wage-earner can put by $1 a week. That money deposited in a savings bank for twenty years will have increased to $1,612. A deposit of $5 a week will have grown to $8,000, and this at 4 per cent will be $340 a year. There is no secret, no mystery about this. It is clear as the cl dless sun and the method is just as clean and honest.

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* * *

The Water Telescope.

The fishermen of Norway sometimes employ a rude sort of water telescope of their own invention. A tube is procured, made of tin and funnel shaped, about three and one-half feet long and nine inches in diameter at the broadest end. It is made wide enough at the top to take in the observer's eyes, and the inside is painted black. At the bottom or wide end a clear, thick piece of glass is inserted, with a little lead in the form of a ring to weight the tube. When the instrument is immersed in clear water it is said that the observer can see down an astonishing number of fathoms.

* * *

J. P.

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* * *

A Short Session.

Mrs. Knicker—Did you hold a short session with your husband?

Mrs. Bocker—Yes. I merely had him pass an appropriation bill.

(Continued from page four.)

the fact that his fancies seemed to be taking shape, and that a face was pictured before him, such a face as caused him to hold his very breath with mingled feelings of astonishment and awe.

Now, it was certainly very strange that so practical a man as Bob Gregory always prided himself on being, should feel a sensation akin to wonder the very first thing; just as though he might be gazing upon the face of the enchantress whose spirit, according to the full belief of old Robert, had crossed over the Styx.

It was only momentary, this chill sensation, and then Bob laughed.

"It's only a picture hung up there, where a fellow is apt to see it when he lies back here on the couch; and yet it gave me an awful start for a fact. Undoubtedly the old gentleman put it there where he could feast his enraptured eyes upon it as he reclined here and smoked, just as I was doing. Ergo, it stands to reason then that this must be the woman herself, the medium who bewitched him into marriage, with an eye to his millions. If that is the case I am doubly interested, and want to study those features."

So he got up quietly from the couch, having thus early learned the folly of sudden movements while that excitable Ajax hovered near, ready to close his teeth in the leg of one he deemed an intruder, and investigate afterwards.

Taking up the lamp he stepped over to the wall and raising it looked long and earnestly at the face framed in a gold setting, and which was of a size to add to the delusion that it might be the original.

"Whew! I don't wonder the old boy was fascinated by Caraminta, if she looked anything like that in later life; this was evidently painted when she was a girl, but if ever there lived an enchantress in the flesh she was one. Those midnight eyes seem to actually enthrall me as I stand here now, for I'll swear undreamed-of power lies slumbering in their depths, which in after years must have developed into tragic force. And this then is the original of the woman who controlled the later years of Robert Gregory's life? And he anticipates that her spirit will give me a call sooner or later, if only I stay on the job!

"A beauty she was all right, but to tell the truth and be honest about it I'd rather be excused from having communication with the lady, either in the flesh or in the spirit. She bedeviled poor old Grandpa Gregory, and I wouldn't like to have her try her charms upon me—hanged if I would! That face is apt to get upon a fellow's nerves, and perhaps in time I'll find it advisable to turn it to the wall; but not yet, for I want to study it awhile. I'm glad I discovered it up there, where no one would think of looking unless they lay back on the couch. It adds piquancy to the situation, to have the authoress of the tangle beaming down upon a fellow in that amiable way. Say, but she was a rare one. I don't believe I've ever set eyes on such a wonderful face; and yet somewhere I must, for there seems to be an impression in my mind that it is familiar. Perhaps she resembles a picture that made a hit with me some time or other. I'll remember it after a bit, but just now it seems to elude me in a tantalizing manner.

"Now, there's one more turn I have to give that time clock at one; somehow it seems settled that if she doesn't appear up to that hour the chance is over for the night, and I may sleep through until seven. I'll bring some shockers to read, so as to keep awake another time; nothing like these best-sellers for dissipating drowsiness. This isn't half bad, with the lamp turned low and that fire crackling. Let the wind whistle, for all of me."

So he communed with himself as he lay there, puffing lazily at his pipe, and occasionally allowing his eyes to roam upward to where that face could be dimly seen through the hazy atmosphere. He had already noted the fact that somewhere in the vicinity a clock in a church tower struck the hours with sufficient resonance to reach him; and he now intended taking his ease until a single stroke announced that it was time he paid his last visit for the night to the apparatus on the wall, when he could then pull the covers over him and settle down for a good sleep.

As he lay there he tried to picture the scene when his grandfather had kept his lonely vigil, and believed he had been visited by the spirit of his charmer; it seemed much more vivid when one had that fascinating face before one's eyes, and was surrounded by the same conditions that had constituted the environment of the other's experience.

Try as he would he found it impossible to keep his eyes away from that picture on the wall, and it was evident that if he expected to have any peace it would have to come down soon. And what was still more singular, as he continued to gaze at the dark gypsy-like features, it seemed to him that the eyes actually closed and opened again, and the whole expression of the face changed, until a most bewitching smile appeared in place of the serious look he had noted, and which had struck him as unconscious power in a soul that had looked out upon the unknown world. As sure as he lived the head had moved, and his startled eyes beheld a misty form assuming shape beneath—a form that took on the outlines of a woman's queenly figure, and that began to glide toward him as if floating on air.

Bob's pipe fell from his mouth, and he lay there incapable of movement, frozen as it were with amazement; for all his convictions of years seemed delusions in the face of this positive evidence of reality. Then the belief of old Gregory had been founded on something substantial, and thus earl, in his long vigil was he fated to be made the recipient of a visit from the wraith of the adventuress.

He shook himself as if to rally all his strength to his relief, and tried to remember what his instructions were should this strange thing he had so often ridiculed as impossible of fulfilment come about. How was he to address that filmy creature with the enchanting face, how make her understand the message left by his ancestor, if his tongue refused to leave the roof of his mouth, and his teeth continued to chatter as they were now doing?

Closer still came the floating figure, and just as old Robert had imagined he could do Bob conceived the idea of suddenly springing up and seizing it in his arms, thus settling once and for all the mystery as to whether it were real or a celestial visitor. Accordingly, summoning all his reserve powers to the fore he made a spring and swept his extended arms through the air, calculating to enfold the object within their scope; but even as he thus charged the figure vanished from his astonished view with a mocking laugh, and he seemed to come with a crash against the wall.

Bob sat up! He was surprised to find himself still on the cot, the fire burned low, Ajax growling like a demon, and tugging at his chain, and the reverberations of a "bang" that must have been made by a shutter blowing shut in the gale still echoing in his ears.

Why, he had been asleep, after all, and dreamed this marvelous thing—the picture had even thus early commenced to have an uncanny effect upon him; and as he cast his eyes uneasily aloft, half expecting to find it gone, he looked once more into those slumbrous midnight orbs, and felt a thrill of awe pass over him at the contact.

"Heigho! this will never do. I wonder what time it is? It's up to me to wind that apparatus again, and then turn in for keeps. Keep quiet, boy; you're about as nervous as I am over this affair, Ajax, old fellow. It was only a confounded blind whanging shut. I'll fix those things tomorrow, to a dead certainty. Everything adds to the occasion when in an adventure like this up to your neck; but given time I'll upset that theory of the old man's. That infernal picture goes to the wall all right; I wouldn't have an easy minute looking into those spooky eyes every night. Phew! that was an experience I don't care to repeat, though. I can hear her taunting laugh still; and yet that, at least, was imagination, if the blind banging shut was real."

He kept on grumbling to himself as he got up, drew upon the lamp for a better light, tossed some wood on the smoldering fire, and then paid attention to the time register.

"This is the limit! Now I'm in for some decent sleep," he muttered, as, having deliberately turned the picture to the wall, he once more dropped upon the couch, and pulled the rug, which had been supplied for the purpose, over him.

When next he opened his eyes it was daylight, and Ajax was pawing at his covering as if to inform him that even a sturdy prize-winning bulldog could have such a thing as a plebeian appetite, and that it was now clamoring for sustenance. So Bob awoke to new responsibilities, for he had to cater to the extravagant tastes of his fellow guardian, and take him out for an airing.

When he considered that this would be his daily condition of existence for the next three months, Bob began to wonder if it were worth it; for he was not partial to dogs of the Ajax breed, and made up his mind that he would find some one whom he could hire to take a daily stroll with the beauty, while he sought a little enjoyment among his old haunts.

On the whole Bob was convinced that his first night's experience was possibly a forerunner of many similar ones to come; and that he must first of all devote such of his time as he could spare to bettering his condition, looking after the loose shutters, attending to that horribly squeaky front door, carrying up a supply of firewood for each evening's use, and among other things seeing if he could discover what had become of the man Cardigan, who had been his grandfather's sole companion during his long vigil at the old masion, and whom Bob was desirous of interviewing for a purpose.

The continuation of this extraordinary story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. Read it. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year.

* * *

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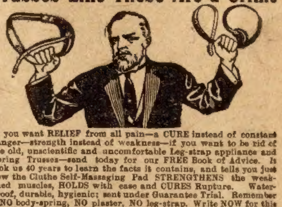

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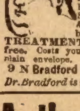

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The Ghost of the Abbey;

Or, THE HAUNTED TOWER

By Granville Osborne

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CHAPTER XI.

THE Christmas season was once more drawing near when Denis and Barry found themselves back in England.

The voyage had accomplished wonders in restoring the young men to health, so that by the time they landed at Southhampton they had nearly, if not quite, recovered their former strength and general vigor.

The first thing Denis did, upon arrival, was to write to his lawyer, and he anxiously awaited a reply, wondering greatly why that gentleman had troubled to advertise for him.

The communication which he received by post was as welcome as it was unexpected; for it set forth nothing more nor less than the startling statement that he was once more the owner of his deceased uncle's valuable property. The letter continued to state that almost immediately after Denis had left Ireland news arrived to the effect that the ship by which the new heir and his mother were traveling had been wrecked and everyone on board perished, but as O'Hara had left no address behind, it was impossible to communicate with him except by the method adopted. This had been done at once and continued from time to time, but as it happened, Denis had not seen the advertisement until he had been exiled a year from his native land.

As the lawyer had forwarded a large draft of money for his immediate use, Denis was resolved to purchase both his discharge and that of Barry. He consequently appealed to the colonel, telling him the facts of the case, whereupon that gallant officer, although sorry to lose so promising a soldier, saw that it was clearly impossible for a young man of Denis' wealth and position to continue to serve in the ranks.

He spoke encouragingly of a commission and hinted that the much-coveted V. C. would probably be bestowed upon the young hero; but although Denis thought no career more glorious than that of a soldier he felt it his duty to return to Ireland, for he knew that the absentee landlord could never hope to make the lives of his tenants happy, and he took the interests of the poor, much-maligned Irish peasant very much to heart.

Consequently, when all the formalities had been accomplished, Denis found himself once more an independent gentleman and free to follow the edicts of his own sweet will. Before proceeding to Ireland he was determined to go to Lyndale and return in person the money Miss St. Quentin had given to him upon the previous Christmas morning.

Myrene's image had never been absent from the young man's thought during all the long, weary campaign, and he felt greatly tempted, now that he was no longer a penniless adventurer, to put his fate to the test and ask her to be his wife.

It was Christmas Eve when Denis and Barry found themselves once more walking through the wild, picturesque valley which led from Lyndale to the Abbey. Not wishing to be recognized, they had asked no questions upon arriving at the little country station, but had left their luggage in the baggageroom and started off at once to walk to their destination.

By a curious coincidence it was just such a clear, frosty, moonlight night as, upon that Christmas eve, when Denis and Myrene strolled together on the terrace, and the girl repeated to him the legend of Jennifred St. Quentin and the haunted tower. The walk, therefore, was not unpleasant and as it was growing late they encountered but few pedestrians.

Upon reaching the Abbey the young men were surprised to find the place in darkness. Knowing how religiously all the old customs were kept up, and remembering the festivals on the previous Christmas eve, they had expected to find lights streaming from all the windows and the echo of gay laughter resounding through the gloomy old halls.

Upon the present occasion all was quiet; indeed a deathly, unearthly silence seemed to hang like a pall over the whole building.

Supposing that, after all, Myrene were away from home and the meeting to which he had been looking forward with such unutterable joy were fated once more to be postponed? Perhaps he was foolish to hope to see her, for many things may happen in a year. She might even be married—married to the true Michael Desmond from Australia.

"Och, sir, it looks as if ivery soul had gone to bed!" remarked Barry in surprise. "It was not like this a year ago!"

Denis took out his watch and examined it eagerly.

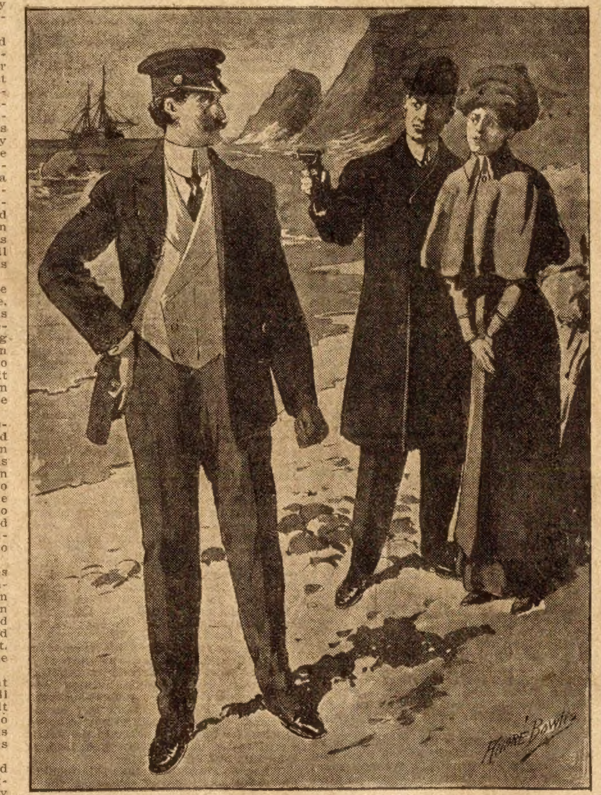
"It's past ten o'clock. I had no idea it was so late. I suppose the members of the household have retired to rest, although it is rather early, especially on Christmas eve."

"Will I ring the bell, sir?" inquired Barry impatiently.

"No, we cannot intrude at such an hour. We must wait until morning," replied Denis decidedly.

"'Tis a long walk back to the village," demurred Barry, who was tired and hungry.

"Yes," said Denis, "and my wounded leg doesn't feel equal to it. I wonder if we could find an old barn to sleep in?" mused Denis.



"Clear out before I shoot you like a dog!"

"The woman at the lodge was a dacent body," remarked Barry reminiscently.

"Yes, but we don't want to be recognized—that would never do. I have it!" he exclaimed suddenly. "You remember that old tower yonder! We'll sleep there tonight."

"The haunted tower, sir?" said the other in dismay. "Why, we might see that terrible specter again!" he added, with a shiver. "It's like to be about this night!"

"Nonsense! We'll have a pipe and make ourselves snug as possible. I warrant the fumes of our tobacco will keep any ghostly visitors away."

Somewhat against his will, Barry accompanied his master to the tower, which was rather dilapidated in appearance and entirely covered with ivy. They found no difficulty in forcing an entrance, as the little black worm-eaten door was merely closed against intruders. The interior of the place was more spacious than Denis had imagined.

A rough flooring covered the ground, which was greatly out of repair and full of pitfalls for the unwary, whilst at one end a rustic bench followed the contour of the round wall. On this bench the two young men reclined, and enveloping themselves in their traveling rugs, prepared to sleep if that were possible.

They had not been there long, however, when footsteps were heard upon the dead, frozen bracken outside.

"The spirit!" muttered Barry, with chattering teeth.

"Be quite!" whispered Denis sternly. "Keep still and no one can see us here in the shadows. It may be one of the servants!"

The footsteps drew nearer and nearer, and finally to the dismay of the occupants, the door of the tower slowly opened and a figure entered. There was no ghostly presence, however, but merely that of a poorly clad man carrying a lantern.

Barry gave a faint gasp of relief when he saw that the intruder was only a human being like himself, and both young men held their breath as they watched the man's movements intently. Placing the lantern on the ground, he knelt down and felt about until his fingers closed over a ring-bolt. This, which was evidently attached to a trapdoor, he pulled with all his strength, revealing to view a dark, yawning abyss. He then rose to his feet and, taking up the light, disappeared down the hole, closing the trapdoor after him.

The young men immediately sprang to their feet.

"Quick! Let us follow him!" whispered Denis excitedly. "It is Jan Pedder, the poacher, and he's up to no good, I'll be bound."

They soon had the heavy trap raised again, and by striking matches, saw a flight of stone steps which seemed to lead down to the very depths of the earth.

These they cautiously descended, and by the aid of the matches—for the steps were well-worn and very dangerous—found themselves in a big, lofty, natural cave. A couple of lanterns stood upon some casks and by the light these emitted the young men saw to their astonishment that the place was stored with boxes and tin cases of every description.

Meanwhile Jan Pedder had vanished—mysteriously it seemed to the explorers—until they saw a narrow passage which was evidently the exit to the cave.

"Smugglers!" exclaimed Barry as he glanced wonderingly around.

Denis who had been examining the cases minutely, replied quickly: "No, I believe these boxes are all full of stolen

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property. See, here are heavy plate chests which have evidently been removed bodily. I remember Miss St. Quentin telling me that there had been several burglaries in the neighborhood. You may depend upon it that this is the robbers' cave."

"Och, sir, an' ye're right! We had better give chase to that thieving scallywag of a Jan!" said Barry, who was always ready for any excitement.

Taking one of the lanterns to guide them, the young men made their way down the passage and presently felt the cold night air blowing in their faces and heard the sound of waves breaking upon the rocks.

On reaching the beach they paused beneath the shadow of the high precipitious cliffs, for before them lay a little bay or cove, which was doubtless almost undiscernible from the sea, and was moreover protected by huge rocks—the ideal spot for a "run" in the olden times. A boat was waiting a few yards off shore, and two men with lanterns were standing conversing together in low voices, whilst far out in the offing Denis could discern the lights of a large vessel. They hastily decided to remain hidden and content themselves with watching the proceedings, resolving not to interfere, as, for all they knew, the whole gang of burglars might be lurking somewhere amongst the rocks.

After waiting a short time they saw two figures climbing cautiously down the steep incline to the beach and these proved upon closer inspection to be those of a man and a woman. Upon reaching the boat the couple paused and seemed to be arguing about something, when the woman suddenly broke away from her companion and commenced running up the beach; but he caught hold of her roughly and dragged her back, as if he would force her into the boat against her will. In her extremity she called out despairingly for help and to his dismay, Denis immediately recognized the agonized tones as those of Myrene.

Without hesitation O'Hara sprang forward and rushed to the assistance of the girl he loved. "You villain!" he cried to the girl's assailant, who proved to be Michael Desmond. "Unhand Miss St. Quentin this instant!"

At the sound of his voice Myrene gave a glad cry, and, wrenching herself from her cousin's grasp, stumbled forward, crying wildly: "Save me, Denis! Oh save me!"

O'Hara drew the trembling girl to him, and, placing a protecting arm around her stood looking defiantly at Desmond, who, in his turn, glared at Denis, his face distorted by hatred and baffled rage.

"How dare you interfere, you—you scoundrel!" cried the latter furiously. "This lady is my wife! I have a right to insist upon her presence on board my yacht, if I wish!"

For a moment Denis' heart sank. Myrene the wife of another! Surely fate had not been so cruel!

"No, no! I am not his wife!" protested the girl vehemently. "He brought me here under false pretenses."

"If you choose to believe what an insane woman says, I cannot convince you," sneered Desmond. "My wife, unhappily, is out of her mind."

"Not so! Miss St. Quentin is no more out of her mind than I am! I happen to be an old friend of hers. Now clear out, before I am tempted to shoot you like a dog!" Denis added sternly, and as he spoke, he put his hand in his breast pocket and drew out a revolver, which he pointed at the Australian's head.

The other shrank back scowling; then as he looked from Denis to Barry in turn a light seemed to dawn upon him.

"I know you now!" he exclaimed exultantly. "You are the audacious scoundrel who impersonated me last Christmast! I saw you both the night of the wreck. How dare you have the impertinence to show your faces here again?"

"It seems that I have arrived at an opportune moment," said Denis, "but if you wish to know my reason it is this—no, on second thought, it is to Miss St. Quentin and her aunt alone that the explanation is due. Come, Miss St. Quentin, you must let me see you safely home," he added to the still trembling girl.

"I shall go straight to the police and obtain a warrant for your arrest," threatened Michael Desmond.

"Do so by all means—if you can find sufficient cause," retorted Denis coolly.

The man's eyes glittered cruelly.

"I think I can. How about my cousin's valuable pearl necklace which disappeared at the same time as you did?"

Myrene gave a cry of dismay. How had he discovered the loss of her necklace?

"I know nothing about the jewels!" replied O'Hara haughtily. "Come, Miss St. Quentin. Do not wait to be annoyed further!" And without another look at his rival Denis led the girl away.

"Oh, Mr. O'Hara, how can I thank you!" began Myrene when they were out of hearing. "But for your timely arrival that wretch would have had me in his power. He inveigled me here by telling me that Jan Pedder had met with an accident and was dying."

"The scoundrel! He is your cousin, the real Desmond, I suppose?"

"Yes, but you cannot think how we detest him—poor auntie and I. He makes our lives positively wretched. But tell me how it is you are here—why you left me so cruelly without coming to me and bidding me farewell?"

"I did not dare to see you; I thought you could never forgive the deception I practiced upon you."

"Oh, I would have gladly forgiven you, for I felt sure that it was more Barry's fault than yours! As it was I suffered cruelly, for I was foolish enough to believe what you told me upon the night of the wreck, and I gave you my whole heart in return," she explained, her voice trembling with emotion.

"Do you love me still, Myrene—after all that has passed?" asked Denis huskily.

"I have never left off loving you," said the girl simply. "Oh, Denis! I read about your great bravery in the papers. I guessed you were the Privates Denis O Hara and James Barry who were mentioned, and I felt so proud to think that Denis O'Hara had once loved me!"

"Once loved you! Darling, I love you now as much as ever! Your image has never been absent from my mind. In fact, that is what brought me here tonight—to see if you still cared for me enough to be my wife. Also I have come to repay your aunt the money she gave me."

"Yes, I will marry you, Denis. I should not fear poverty with the man I love. Besides, I have some money of my own, dear. I am sure you will not allow pride to stand in the way of our love?" she pleaded.

"We will discuss that point later, my darling," said Denis as he stooped and kissed her lovely upturned face. "So long as you love me nothing else matters in the wide world." Then he added, after a few blissful moments, during which they gazed fondly and trustfully into each other's eyes. "What did that blackguard mean about having me arrested? Is it true that your beautiful pearls have been stolen?"

"Yes, I am sorry to say they are gone," she answered sadly.

"Did you think that I had stolen them?" he asked quickly.

"Oh, no, no! I never imagined you capable of such a thing, and I am sure I cannot think how my cousin came to know of my loss, as I never mentioned the fact to any one except Ada, and she would not tell. Perhaps the other servants noticed that I did not wear the necklace and presumed that it had been stolen with the other things," she explained hurriedly.

"You have missed other things, then?" asked Denis curiously.

"Yes, some valuable plate has also disappeared; I fear one of the servants must be dishonest."

"I believe I can tell you where the stolen property lies. Barry and I had quite an adventure tonight, which subsequently led to our being on the shore in time to come to your assistance."

Then in a few words Denis told his companion of all that had taken place and the chests and cases they had seen in the cave beneath the old tower.

"I never trusted Jan Pedder!" exclaimed Myrene, when he had finished the story. "And I feel sure now that it was he who took my pearls. We must communicate with the police at once; but that reminds me that my cousin threatened to have you arrested. Do you think he will keep his word?"

"I doubt if he can prove anything against me except the fact of my having impersonated him; but unless you or your aunt wish to lay any charge against me on that account, he can't do me much harm."

"Auntie and I will defend you! Poor auntie! How glad she she will be to see you again! She grieved so terribly when she learned that you were not her nephew after all, for she had come to love you!" said Myrene softly.

"Ah, if you only knew what a guilty wretch I feel and how many times I was on the point of throwing myself upon your mercy and confessing everything to you!" cried Denis remorsefully.

Upon reaching the Abbey the young man evinced his surprise at seeing the place in darkness.

"Knowing how fond you are of all old customs I thought you would be sitting up to welcome in Christmas," he said inquiringly.

"Michael Desmond says that keeping up the old Christmas customs is superstitious—a relic of paganism. He has forbidden the carol singers to come and will not allow any festivities whatever—not even the servants' ball. As he is practically master here, my aunt being in too great fear of her nephew to insist upon his leaving the Abbey, we are forced to bow to his will," explained Myrene.

"The blackguard!" muttered Denis savagely. "Well, he shall annoy you no more, if I can prevent it," he added, thinking that if Desmond refused to be evicted he would carry Myrene and her aunt to his beautiful castle in Ireland.

Aunt Lucinda was sitting up for Myrene in her little boudoir at the back of the house. She wondered what could be keeping the girl out so long, and anxiously inquired of Ada, from time to time, if her young mistress had returned from her errand of mercy.

The room looked exceedingly snug and inviting. A cheerful fire burned in the grate, whilst behind every picture and in every available vase Myrene had placed sprigs of holly and pearly mistletoe, for she had determined that her own private apartments should look as Christmas like as possible despite Michael Desmond and his hateful authority.

Aunt Lucinda gave an exclamation of relief when she saw Myrene enter the room, her face full of subdued excitement.

"Auntie, darling, I have a Christmas box for you!" cried the girl gayly. "Guess what it is! Then, before bewildered Miss St. Quentin could speak, she thrust Denis proudly forward.

The look of joy which illumined the old lady's face upon seeing the visitor seemed almost pathetic.

With a glad cry, "Oh, my boy—my dear boy, you have come back to me at last," she tottered forward to greet him, and Denis, with a sudden impulse, prompted not so much by pity as affection, took her in his arms and kissed her heartily upon her withered cheeks.

After the excitement caused by his unexpected arrival had somewhat subsided Denis gave a detailed account of the circumstances which had led in the first instance to his impersonating Michael Desmond. He then told his attentive listeners of his unexpected change of fortune, adding that he would never have dared to return to ask Myrene to be his wife had he still been a pauper.

"Then, you are rich, after all!" exclaimed the girl, somewhat in dismay. "Oh, Denis, it was too bad of you not to tell me! What must you think of me, throwing myself at your head, as it were, almost proposing to you because I thought you were poor!"

"Perhaps I did it purposely, darling? It is so sweet to be loved for oneself alone," replied the young man fondly.

"You can never doubt that now, dear one," said Myrene, with a happy smile. Then, as her eyes rested upon the little silver clock upon the mantelpiece, she added in surprise, "It is twelve o'clock! Christmas Day has dawned! Come, let us listen to the church bells!"

She swiftly crossed the room and opened the quaint latticed window. Her lover quietly followed and together they heard the chimes ushering in "tidings of great joy."

"Peace on earth, good will towards men!" murmured Myrene softly. "I feel at peace with all mankind tonight—even with Michael Desmond!" she added thoughtfully.

"Yes, even with Michael Desmond!" agreed Denis as he drew the girl into his arms. "But for his existence you and I would never have met and loved, dear heart!"

CHAPTER XII.

It was with a curious mixture of feeling that Denis found himself once more in his old bedroom. Of how much did it remind him? The first knowledge he had possessed of Barry's daring plot came to him there; his encounter with the terrible ghost had taken place within its walls.

He had often wondered what the apparition could have been, and now the idea suggested itself that perhaps it might have been Jan Pedder thus disguised so as to facilitate his nefarious designs. However, all "creepy" thoughts were speedily dismissed by the arrival of Barry, who appeared to be in the highest of spirits.

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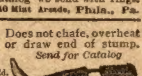

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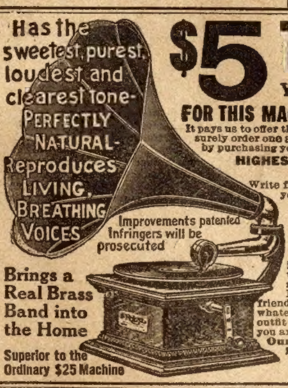
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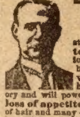

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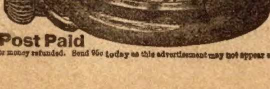

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GENTLE JABS.

It's easier to set a good example than to hatch it out.

Unless a man lives to learn he will never learn to live.

It is easier to accept a position than it is to hold a job.

Soaking the brain in alcohol does not preserve the mind.

You never hear a man boast that his wife shines his shoes.

It isn't what you have been but what you are that counts.

It is easier to look thoughtful than it is to deliver the thoughts.

The tail of a mouse is one of the conclusions a woman will jump at.

If misery loves company it's up to everybody to get married.

Anyway, we never knew a man to marry a woman to reform her.

Don't make the mistake of trying to correct the mistakes of a friend.

Why does a man invariably write his own name when given a pen to try?

Free advice is the kind people give away because they have no use for it.

A man wastes a lot of time asking questions that he doesn't want answered.

A pretty girl tries to give people the impression that she is tired of being admired.

And some people get a lot of enjoyment out of the trouble they are to bestow on others.

Some men are like the wind; they can't even raise a disturbance without blowing about it.

The trust may limit the output of whisky, but it would never, never try to limit the input.

How it must jolt a man when he is polite to his wife in public to have her look as if she wasn't used to it!

A conceited young man imagines that every engaged girl would like to break off the engagement after meeting him.

Even if a man doesn't get busy and make love to a pretty girl the first time they meet she always suspects that he would like to.

A woman hands herself a quantity of disappointment if she thinks her singing is going to keep her husband at home every evening.

understanding!" he announced somewhat vaguely, whilst his honest face fairly beamed with happiness.

"What do you mean?" asked his master in a puzzled tone.

"Why, me an' that black-eyed colleen, to be sure! She's promised to be Mrs. James Barry," replied the young Irishman proudly. "That is, if ye've no objections, sir?"

"My dear, faithful friend, do you think for one moment that I should be selfish enough to stand in the light of your happiness? I congratulate you most sincerely, for I think that pretty Ada will make you a charming little wife!"

Denis wrung the hand of his servant and comrade with heartiness.

"Ye see, sir, it isn't as if I should have to leave ye; for if my marrying necessitated that I shouldn't think of it for one moment," continued Barry firmly. "But it's like this. When ye marry Miss St. Quentin she'll still want her maid and ye couldn't get on widout me, nohow; so we've agreed to remain in your service, and our being married won't make no kind o' difference to ye."

"I see; you have arranged it all quite nicely," said Denis, with an amused smile. "By the way how did you know that Miss St. Quentin and I were—er—going to be married?"

"By yer happy face, sir," replied Barry promptly.

"That's conclusive evidence," said Denis laughingly. "Ah, Barry, I owe you a debt of gratitude that I can never repay!"

"Ye have repaid it, Master Denis, a hundredfold—for didn't ye risk yer life for mine out yonder?"

At that moment a slight sound in the corridor outside caused them to look at each other in surprise. Denis softly opened the door, and they peered out cautiously into the darkness. Coming down the long corridor outside their door, directly toward them, was the same tall, white-clad figure which had appeared to both upon separate occasion.

Without a moment's hesitation Denis stepped forward, barring the creature's way and, snatching the revolver out of his pocket—fortunately he had not yet taken off his coat—leveled it at the head of the uncanny thing.

"Halt, or I'll fire!" he cried in a sharp voice, and, somewhat to his surprise, the creature hesitated, and finally turned round and began hurrying back whence it came in a most unghostly manner.

Denis and Barry immediately gave chase, the former crying out to the supposed "spirit" to stop or he would be compelled to fire.

No heed was paid to the warning, and Denis, who was determined to get to the bottom of the mystery, lowered his revolver and aimed at the fugitive's legs. A loud report, an agonized scream, and the next moment the terrible "ghost" sank to the floor with a curious clatter. When the two young men reached the spot, the poor "spirit" was lying very still. It took a long time to unfasten the cleverly constructed mask formed from a skull, with its dreadful eye-sockets smeared with luminous paint, but when this was done, what was their surprise at discovering that the alarming "ghost" was actually a woman—and that none other than Thomasina Pedder.

The girl had fainted either from fright or pain, for the bullet had entered her foot; but it was extremely difficult to discover its whereabouts, as strapped on to her boots were the bony feet of a skeleton, which accounted for the mysterious footsteps the young man had seen in the snow.

The sound of the shot quickly brought the servants hurrying to the spot together with Myrene and Ada, who had also been aroused, and the unconscious Thomasina was carried into the nearest bedroom and the doctor sent for. Upon his arrival the medical man stated that whereas the wound was not dangerous, the patient would require good nursing and would probably be laid up for some time.

In spite of feeling naturally indignant with Thomasina for the unprincipled trick she had played, Myrene decided not to send the girl to her wretched home, but to keep her at the Abbey until she was quite convalescent. In so doing Myrene hoped to gain the strange girl's friendship, and also by kindness to win her from her bold, flighty ways and make her more respected.

* * *

When he fully realized that his villainous plan for abducting Myrene had failed, Michael Desmond hurriedly bade the men in his employ to return to the yacht whence they had come, and then hastened towards Lyndale. He had not proceeded far, however, when he discovered, to his alarm, that he was being followed —an extremely unpleasant sensation upon the edge of a precipice—and his fear was by no means assuaged when on looking round, he saw that it was Jan Pedder who was dogging his steps.

Desmond walked on for a few yards, meditating as to what was best to be done. Then he suddenly wheeled round and faced the man.

"Why, Pedder, is that you? I shall be glad of your company, as it is a bit lonely up here," he said, with an air of would-be cheerfulness, which he was far from feeling.

"I am not so sure as thee'll be glad of my company when thee hears what I have to tell 'ee," remarked Jan grimly.

"Why, what can you have to say to me, Pedder?" asked Desmond in a tone of well-simulated surprise.

"Don't 'ee ride the high horse with me, man!" retorted the other savagely. "I tell 'ee I saw thee down in the cave awhile ago trying to carry off Miss Myrene."

"Ah, you were watching me? Well, then, I suppose you also saw that my plans were frustrated by that impostor!" said Desmond angrily.

"Ay, I saw that, too!" was the sullen reply.

"I hate that man!" continued Desmond bitterly. "Look here, Pedder, I know you are not particular as to how you earn money. I'll give you a hundred pounds to put him out of the way for me. Will you do it?" he added eagerly.

"Oh, and leave the way clear for you to marry Miss Myrene? Naw, I'll not do it."

"Come, I'll make it two hundred!" said Desmond persuasively.

"No! Nor for a thousand pounds neither! Michael Desmond thou art a villain, and unless thee gives me thy solemn vow to marry my daughter Thomasina, as thee promised, I'll hurl thee over this cliff!"

With a quick movement Jan Pedder caught hold of the Australian's arm and held it as in a vice.

"Marry Thomasina! Nonsense, man! You must have taken leave of your senses. It would look well for the master of the Abbey to wed the daughter of a poacher! No, no! I'll act fairly and squarely in the matter; but as for marriage, why, you must see for yourself that it would be out of the question!" retorted Desmond impatiently.

"Then over thee'll go," said Jan doggedly, and he gave his victim a push towards the edge of the precipice.

"Don't play the fool, man!" cried Desmond, who was now thoroughly terrified. "Let go my arm, or we'll both go over the cliff together. We must discuss this matter quietly, and—er—if you insist upon my marrying your daughter I suppose I'll have to do so."

The poacher looked at him doubtfully.

"You'll put your promise in writing, then, and sign it with your own name," he said firmly.

"Very well; you must let go of my arm or I cannot get out my pocketbook," said Desmond, hoping to gain time by pretending to concede to the man's wishes.

Jan Pedder did so reluctantly, and with trembling hands the other fumbled in his pockets and at length produced a notebook and pencil. He tore out a sheet, and wrote what his persecutor dictated. When he had put his name to what he had written, Michael Desmond handed the paper to Jan, who took it eagerly, and began examining it closely to see if the document was properly worded and signed.

Thinking to take him off his guard, the Australian suddenly bent forward and let out his fist with the intention of striking his companion a violent blow on the head. But almost simultaneously Jan happened to turn round, and the next instant both men were locked together in a deadly embrace. For a moment they swayed to and fro on the edge of the precipice, each struggling in a frenzy of desperation to overpower the other. Then, with an awful cry that reverberated weirdly from rock to rock, and scared the very sea-birds from their slumber, the two men fell headlong down the fearful abyss.

The mangled bodies of Michael Desmond and Jan Pedder were found at daybreak by some fishermen and carried to the mortuary to await an inquest.

Greatly as she had disliked her cousin, his dreadful death naturally came as a shock to Myrene, although she could not pretend to grieve at his loss, especially as she had learned that he had tried to murder his kind old aunt.

Thomasina Pedder, whose heart Myrene quickly won confessed that Desmond had by promising to marry her, persuaded the girl to drop a deadly poison into the old lady's milk, so that she might die before she had time to alter her will; and had it not been for Myrene's warning dream, and prompt action the dreadful crime would surely have been carried into execution.

The girl confessed also, that her father was the head of a gang of burglars, and that she herself, disguised as a ghost had visited the Abbey, several times in order to steal Myrene's famous pearls, but, although she had hunted in every nook and corner, she had only accidentally discovered their hiding-place upon the night of the servants' ball.

Upon the cave beneath the tower being searched the missing necklace was found intact, together with a great quantity of plate and jewels, stolen at various times from neighboring mansions. These were subsequently returned to their owners and the gang of robbers scattered and imprisoned.

In consequence of Michael Desmond's death Christmas day was spent in perfect quietness; but in spite of drawn blinds and the hush that had fallen upon the house, Denis and Myrene were supremely happy sitting over the fire in the cozy hall, making delightful plans for the future.

They decided to live half the year in Ireland and the other half in England, always spending the Christmas season at the Abbey, filling the house with guests

(Continued on page fifteen.)

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Capt. W. A. Collings, Box 699, Watertown, N. Y.

CLIMBING THE BARRIER;

Or, The Search for the South Pole

By STEPHEN ANGUS COX

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CHAPTER IX.

DISAPPOINTED.

NEXT DAY they talked the matter over again, and decided that they might be able to reach the farther side of the plateau by climbing up the slope, over about half a mile to one side of the new volcanic island, and thus get across to where the ship lay at anchor.

After considerable discussion, Worth said he thought they might succeed, and early next morning they set out, crossing the water on a raft that he had built. They took their provisions, and as soon as they were across to the edge of the ice-plateau, they began the ascent, Worth going ahead and chopping steps. When they reached the top, they rested awhile, and then Worth began the work of carrying the provisions up the slope, which he accomplished by noon. Then they ate a lunch and set out across the plateau.

They encountered wide cracks or crevices in the plateau several times, and had to go several miles out of their way. It took them five days to get across, and then when they came to the point where the ship had been left at anchor in the little bay, they met with an unpleasant surprise—the ship was gone!

Standing on the edge of the precipice of the Great South Barrier, Eugenia Holman and Richard Worth gazed blankly down at the waters of the little bay, and saw no signs of the steamer or of any of the members of the expedition.

What had become of the steamer? Where were the other members of the party?

That was the question, and it was a question that neither of them could answer. The steamship was gone, that was certain, however, and the realization gradually came to them that it meant considerable to them, for with the ship gone, their chances of escape were exceedingly slim; in fact, there did not seem to be any chance for them to escape, unless the steamer again put in an appearance, and they could see nothing of the vessel in any direction. It had disappeared, and the thought that came to Worth was, that possibly the portion of the party that Mr. Holman had been with when the iceberg parted had been lost, and the other members had reached the ship and sailed away, in which case they would not return, and he and the girl would perhaps lose their lives in this far Southern region, beyond the Great South Barrier.

Suddenly Genie sat down on the sled that Worth had hauled from the farther side of the plateau, and burst into tears. She gazed down at the bay, and then around at the ocean, in every direction, and for a few moments Worth stood there, looking out across the waters, after a first surprised glance at the girl. He waited silently, till Genie had quit crying, and then again glanced toward her. She was looking up at him, and on meeting his gaze, said:

"I suppose you think me weak and foolish for giving way to my feelings in this manner, Mr. Worth; but I have been looking forward to finding the ship here, and perhaps my father also, and the disappointment is pretty keen."

"You would naturally feel disappointed," was the reply. "But, I wouldn't worry, if I were you. Likely you will see your father before long, for he and his companions may turn up at any time."

"But, what has become of the ship!" the girl asked.

"That I cannot say. Possibly it may have got loose and drifted away."

"That may be; but if so, how will we ever get back to civilization?"

Worth shook his head. "I can't answer that," he said. "The question is, now, what shall we do—stay here and await the return of the ship, or the turning up of your father and the other members of the expedition; or shall we return to the island, where it is at least warm and comfortable?"

Genie pondered awhile, and then said: "We might stay here two or three days, and then if they do not come, we can return to the island."

"Very well. It won't be very comfortable here, but we can stand it two or three days, I guess."

"Yes, I think so."

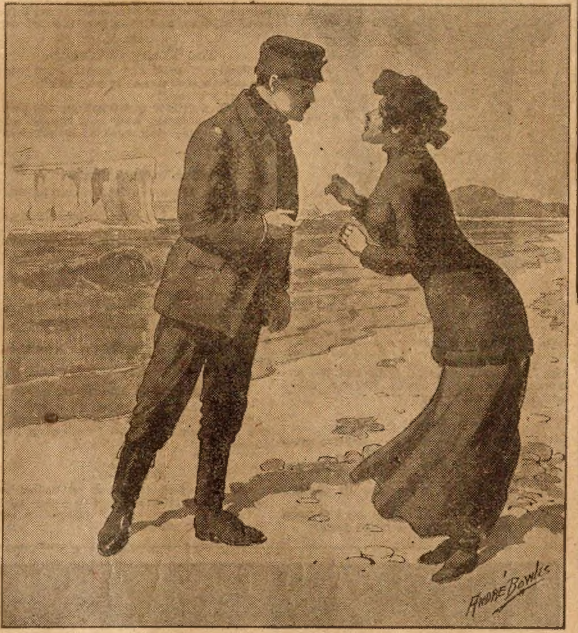
They made themselves as comfortable as possible. Worth selected a place where there was a sort of depression in the ice, and cut out several pieces which he piled up so as to make a windbreak on the north side, as the coldest wind came from that direction. Owing to the fact that the hot water thrown up by the geysers down in the South Pole region caused a warm current of air to come from that direction, the two fixed their camp so that they faced that way.

That day passed, and the next, and still there were no signs of the other members of the expedition, nor of the ship. Genie grew more sober each day, and Worth saw that she was very much depressed, and that she had about given up hope of seeing her father and the other members of the expedition soon again.

"We will wait another day," said Genie. "I hope we shall see them by tomorrow evening, for I hate to return to the island."

"I'll tell you what we will do, Miss Holman," said Worth. "I will fix up a sort of resting-place in the top of these ice-blocks, and put a letter there, telling any one who comes where to look for us. So we will then wait more contentedly, with the expectation of being taken off the island sooner or later."

"I think that my father and the others reached the ship, and for some reason sailed away to some point, and will be back again," said Genie; "so as you say, I shall rest reasonably content."



She found herself face to face with the second mate.

They waited till the next evening, and then decided to start on the return to the island in the morning. This they did, after a good night's rest, and the tiresome trip across the plateau was made in about four days and a half.

They crossed to the island on the raft, again took up their residence in the cabin, and settled down to make themselves as comfortable as possible. Genie seemed somewhat brighter, the first day after their return; but this was probably owing to the fact that she was more comfortably situated, by being where the weather was warm, and was in a cabin, with something in the way of home comfort.

The next day, however, she did not have much to say, and seemed to be doing a great deal of thinking, and although Worth tried to get her to brighten up, she did not seem to respond very freely, and when evening came, she did not sit up long after supper, but went into her room and left Worth to sit in the front room alone.

He looked thoughtfully at the wall and reviewed the events of the past week or two and tried to size up the real situation. He had not told Genie his suspicions regarding the matter, but he was pretty well satisfied in his own mind that a portion of the party of explorers had been lost at the time of the breaking up of the plateau, and that Mr. Holman had been one of those who was lost. In that case the other members of the party who had doubtless reached the ship and sailed away, would not return, for they naturally supposed that Worth and Genie had been lost also. And in thinking over the matter, Worth thought of Ralston, and wondered if he were a member of the party that had been lost. Then another thought struck him.

Was Genie wondering the same thing, and was her soberness induced as much by the uncertainty regarding the fate of the second mate as by that regarding the fate of her father. Worth hoped not, for—well, he did not, for some reason like the idea of Genie feeling sorry because she did not know the whereabouts of Robert Ralston.

CHAPTER X.

GENIE IS SURPRISED.

He sat up an hour or so, and then lay down on his bunk and was soon asleep. Next morning Genie was in about the same state of mind, seemingly, and did not have much to say, nor did Worth. He remembered about the second mate, and there was a disquieting feeling at his heart.

"We may as well look about the island," said Worth. "If we have to stay here some time, we may as well know as much about our surroundings as possible. It may be of use to us later."

"True," said Genie. "I shall be glad to take a walk about the island."

They set out, after they had eaten breakfast, and made the tour of the island. They went around, keeping near the shore, till they had made the complete circuit and had walked perhaps three miles, the island being nearly a mile in diameter.

They were not very tired when they returned to the cabin, but both seemed to be in better spirits than before they took the walk. Worth, had enjoyed it very much, and as he noted that Genie's face had taken on color, he was glad that walk had seemingly done her good also.

They talked till noon, when they ate dinner, and an hour or so later they walked up to the highest point on the island and looked about them. There were several islands not far distant, but a few miles to the southward was a very large one, seemingly ten miles in diameter, which was considerably higher at the center than the one they were on. It was almost a mountain at the center, being perhaps a thousand feet in height, and the island was wooded. It was about ten miles distant.

As they stood there, looking, Worth was startled by a sudden exclamation from Genie.

"Look!" she cried, pointing toward the island.

(Continued on page twelve.)

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A Wrong Conclusion.

Jimmy, like all healthy boys, was fond of playing outdoors and, like boys in general, he usually got himself scandalously dirty. He was about to sit down to dinner one day, when his mother happened to notice the soiled condition of his hands and sent him out to the kitchen to wash them.

"You incorrigible boy!" she exclaimed, as soon as she saw the basin of water in which he had performed the required ablutions. "How in the world do you manage to get your hands so dirty?"

"That didn't all come from my hands!" indignantly answered Jimmy. "I washed my face in that water, too!"

As He Heard It.

The young man stood hesitating upon the steps until the shrill, girlish voices died away, and Alice opened the door.

"Oh! Have you been here long?" she exclaimed.

"Only about five minutes," he replied, availing himself in a hesitating manner of her invitation to enter.

"Then you heard us?"

"Er, well, a little, you know—I really couldn't help it. I was just about to go, you know——" he stammered.

"About to go—why?"

"Though I might be inopportune, you know. Realize that such things are bound to happen once in awhile, you know—really can't be helped—even most sweet tempered persons——"

"Why—er—of course I wouldn't have presumed to mention it, you know! My brother and I—every once in awhile—we do, really!"

"You do, really, what?"

"Er, quarrel, you know."

Alice looked coldly out of the window.

"When you came," she said, evenly, "my sister and I were singing our new duet."

Avoiding Trouble.

"I am sure that you have never had a fight with my little boy."

"No'm."

"That is because he obeys me and always counts a hundred before he strikes a blow."

"Yessum, and because when he has finished counting his hundred he ain't there no more."

A Disappointment.

Mrs. Struckile—Did ye meet Queen Mary while you were abroad, Mrs. McShoddle?

Mrs. McShoddle—No, I didn't, and I was real sorry, too. I wanted to get her recipe for English plum puddin'!

What She Wants.

"To make her new hat complete," says the Boarding House Philosopher, woman must have something on it that no money can buy—the eyes of all the other women."

His Mistake.

There is a good and all-sufficient reason for the absence from Pleasant Hill of a well-known young man of that town. He bought a box of American beauty roses from a local florist, intending to send them to his "best girl," who was celebrating her birthday. As he was to call on the young lady that evening it behooved him to have a pair of white trousers pressed slick and clean. The Pleasant Hill Toggery, in due time, received the box of roses, with instructions to "press these at once." The box, containing the trousers, was delivered at the home of the young lady and the accompanying note read: "Wear these when I call this evening."

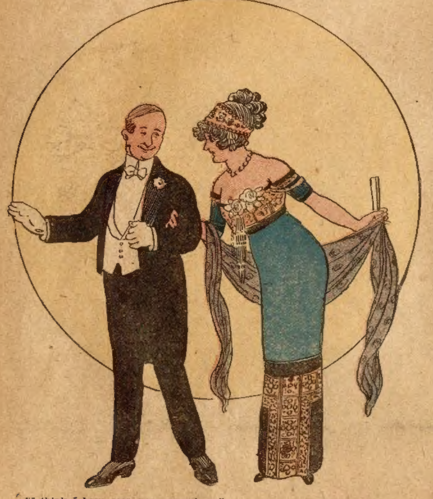
Big Dogs in Demand.

Country Cousin—Little dogs have gone out of fashion, haven't they?

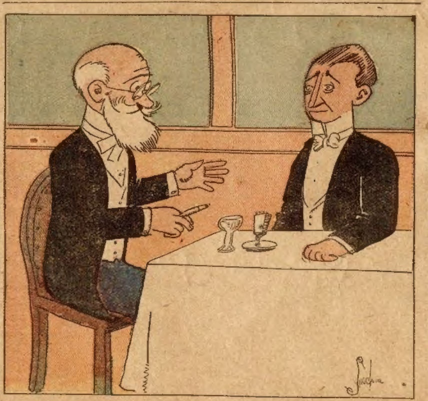
Mrs. De Style—No, indeed. They are more popular than ever.

"But I notice that you are all getting big dogs."

"Yes, we have to have big dogs to keep people from stealing the little dogs."



"I think I have seen you somewhere."
"Quite possible, sir! I've been there quite a number of times."



"The secret of my profitable practice, sir, lies in keeping my rich patients about halfway between getting well and dying!"

TICKLISH TACKLES

Turn About.

At Cumberland, Md., the colored servants as a rule go to their own homes at night. The cook in the family of the Episcopalian clergyman not only does this, but of late has arrived at the rectory too late to cook breakfast. Hence her mistress lately told her for each breakfast missed there would be a reduction in her weekly wages. Dinah passively assented to this, but next day the mistress heard the maid next door say to her:

"'Pears to me you get to work mighty late."

"I gets to work when I get ready," was the reply.

"How does you manage about de brekfus?"

"Oh, I pays de missus to cook de brekfus."

A Cold Day.

Mrs. De Silke—I wish to give a memorial of some kind to the church, in memory of a relative. What would you suggest?

Struggling Pastor—A—er—an appropriately decorated—er—new church furnace, madam, and a—a few tons of coal.

The Young Philologist.

"Father," said the small boy, "does 'procrastinate' mean 'to put off?'"

"Yes, my son."

"Well, a fellow got fresh on the street car this morning and you should have seen the way the conductor procrastinated him!"

The Bargain Hunter.

Bargain Hunter—How much is this?

Salesman—Seven dollars.

Bargain Hunter—Too much! I'll give you ten dollars.

Salesman—I said seven dollars, madam.

Bargain Hunter—Seven? I'll give you six dollars.

Ending Often Unhappy.

"Women patronize the drama extensively, but they must be assured of a happy ending."

"I guess that's why they don't care much for baseball."

A Great Little Sight.

"Where are you going so fast?"

"My wife has just telephoned me that the baby is asleep, and I am going home to see what it looks like."

Just Why.

"Do you find the cost of living any higher than it was, say five years ago?"

"Yes, sir. Two of my daughters have got married since."

Young Diplomatist.

Taddy, aged four, often called on his nearest neighbor, Mrs. Brown, who petted him a good deal and usually gave him a couple of her nice cookies, and if she happened to forget to pass them out he sometimes reminded her of it.

His father learned of this and chided him for begging and told him he must not do so any more. A day or two later Taddy came home with cooky crumbs in evidence.

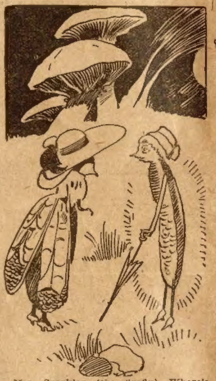
"Have you been begging cookies from Mrs. Brown again?" asked his father rather sternly.

"No!" said Taddy. "I didn't beg for any. I just said: 'This house smells as if it was full of cookies,' but what's that to me?"

The Reason.

Little Willie—Say, pa, why is Justice always blindfolded?

Pa—Because she is forever getting a black eye, my son.



Mrs. Sparkles (the firefly)—Where's the nurse you used to have for your children?

Mrs. Stripes (the horsefly)—I had to let her go. She frightened the children so with stories of fierce dragon flies and deadly house flies.

Ahead of the Procession.

It was the custom of the congregation to repeat the Twenty-third Psalm in concert, and Mrs. Armstrong's notion of joining was to keep about a dozen words ahead all the way through. A stranger was asking one day about Mrs. Armstrong. "Who," he inquired, "was the lady who was already by the still waters while the rest of us were lying down in green pastures?"

Often the Way.

"Now that your daughter has graduated she will have more time on her hands."

"Yes."

"I suppose she expects to help her mother?"

"No, she expects to join another bridge club."

Disappointment.

"You maneuvered to get acquainted with him and now you don't seem to care for him at all."

"No, I am disappointed in him."

"What's he done?"

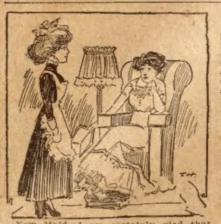
"Nothing. I heard he was a bear in Wall Street; but he certainly never acted like one when he was with me."

Infallible.

"There is one sign of an early fall which I have never known to fail," remarked the weather prophet.

"What is that?" asked his companion.

"A careless banana peel on the pavement."



New Maid—I am certainly glad that you are a widow, Mrs. Smith.

Mistress—Why, Mary, how can you say that?

New Maid—I am tired of being fired every week through jealousy.

A Helpful Friend.

The motorist emerged from beneath the car and struggled for breath. His helpful friend, holding the oil can, beamed upon him.

"I've just given the cylinder a thorough oiling, Dick, old man," said the helpful friend.

"Cylinder!" said the motorist heatedly, "that wasn't the cylinder; it was my ear!"

First Aid.

A little lad was desperately ill, but refused to take the medicine the doctor had left. At last his mother gave him up. "Oh, my boy will die! My boy will die," she sobbed.

But a voice spoke from the bed. "Don't cry, mother. Father'll be home soon and he'll make me take it."

His Letter.

The diplomat wrote a letter to a man with whom he had quarreled, as follows: "Sir:—My stenographer, being a lady, cannot transcribe what I think of you. I, being a gentleman, cannot think it. But you, being neither, will readily understand what I mean."

Real Torture.

"Talk about torture."

"Yes?"

"Nothing is worse than sitting in a barber's chair with your mouth full of lather, watching the boy trying to give another customer your Panama hat."

The Usual Result.

She (wearily)—My head aches awfully.

He—What have you been doing?

She—I've been trying to decide whether that bargain I got today at a bargain counter is a bargain or not.

Easier Way.

Marks—Yes. I'm working night and day to put the scheme through.

Parks—You're foolish. Do nothing about it, and it will fall through.

When Women Vote.

"If Molly Donahue wint to vote in a livery stable th' first thing she'd do wud be to get a broom, sweep up th' floors, take th' harness from th' walls, an' hang up a picture iv Niagary be moonlight; chase out th' watchers an' polis, remove th' seegars, make th' judges get a shave, an' p'raps invalydate th' illiction. It's no job f'r her, an' I told her so."—Mr. Dooley (F. P. Dunne).

Not Always Welcome.

"A man should never go anywhere when he has the slightest suspicion that his presence is not desired."

"Perhaps," replied Mr. Cumrox. But a strict deference to that idea would have kept me away from many an important board of directors' meeting."

Can't Improve on Nature.

"Doctors now say that boiled cow's milk is not good for babies; it is better raw."

"The doctors are right; a raw cow gives better milk than a boiled one."

What He Thought.

"Johnny, I have great news for you; I am going to marry your sister. What do you think about that?"

"I think it serves her right."

A Difficult Case.

A physician received late one evening this note from three of his fellow-practitioners: "Please step over to the club and join us at a rubber of whist."

"Emilie, dear," he said to his wife, "here I am, called away again. It appears to be a difficult case—there are three other doctors on the spot already."

Prosperous Times.

"All you farmers out this way must be prosperous. I see ten automobiles to one horse."

"Yes, the farmers all use automobiles themselves, but they have to keep a horse for the hired man."

Not Parallel Cases.

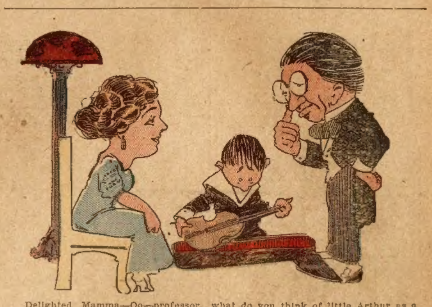
"Ah, my friend," said a cleric to a prisoner undergoing a term of imprisonment for burglary, "we must not lose sight of the fact that we are here today and gone tomorrow!"

"You may be, sir," replied the burglar, "but I ain't!"

Suspicious.

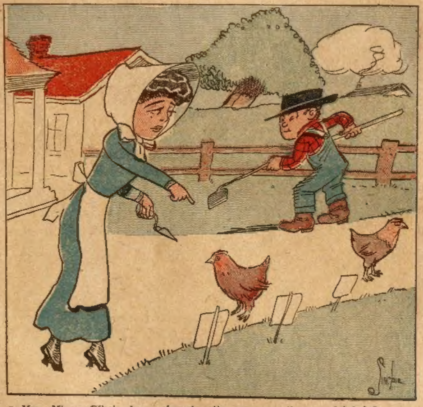
"Why don't you like to take passengers on your airship?"

"Because," replied the aviator, "any non-professional who wants to go up in an airship is so foolhardy that I can't help giving him credit offhand for the boat-rocking instinct."



Delighted Mamma—Oo—professor, what do you think of little Arthur as a violinist?

Professor—I like the way he puts the fiddle back in the case.



Mrs. Mixer—Who's been changing the names on these seed labels?

Mr. Mixer—I have. It's the only way to keep those pesky hens from scratching them all up. As you will observe, I have written "Hen Poison" over each label.

The Social Manner.

Little Emily had learned that certain comestibles, though most palatable, were forbidden to a 5-year-old. One day she was helping mother prepare luncheon for company.

"Mother," she said, "that lobster salad looks most vitin'."

"Does it, dear?" answered the mother.

"Yes." Then, after a moment, "Mother, don't you think it would be nice if you was just to ask me to have a little at the table? You could say, 'Emily, will you have some lobster salad?' Of course, I needn't take any, you know. But your asking me would look nice 'fore Mrs. Brown. Don't you think so?"

Her mother agreed, and during luncheon Emily was a model of propriety. When the salad came her mother said: "Emily, will you have some lobster salad?"

"Huh," was the prompt response, "don't care if I do!"

Tailor's Mistake.

The tailor brought "Jack" home a suit the other day. "Jack" went upstairs to try it on. Then, ten minutes later, he shouted down to his wife:

"That fool tailor's made a botch out of the vest!"

"How, John?" Mrs. Hughes asked.

"Why, said "Jack," "he's put a button too many at the top and a button-hole too many at the bottom."

Not What You Pay.

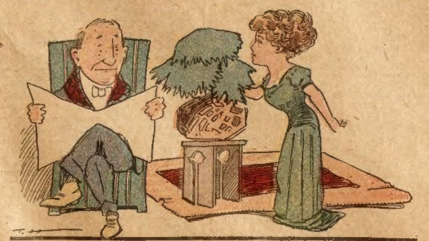
"It isn't what you pay for clothes that makes you well dressed," said Mrs. Kicker.

And Mrs. Bocker remarked: "No, indeed; it's what you owe."

A Concession.

"Great operatic artists do most of their singing in Italian."

"Yes. But they do most of their counting in American money."



Mrs. Dinkham—Were you a hero before you married me"
Mr. Dinkham—No, not until I married you.

A Matter of Choice.

"This is a mighty queer world," said the misanthrope.

"Well," replied the good-natured man, "our impressions of it depend a great deal on whether we go in for the high class exhibitions or the side shows."

Another Way.

"Why do you wish to go on the stage?" inquired the manager.

"I want to get a millionaire husband."

"Well, the stage is overcrowded just now. Be a trained nurse."

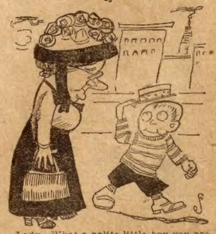
How He Knew.

"I have often predicted that my wife's hair would be nice and curly at night," says the Boarding House Philosopher. "How did I know? Why, I saw it in the morning papers."

As to Friendship.

Gibbs—How nice it is to have a friend whom you can trust.

Dibbs—Yes; especially if he doesn't ask you to trust him



Lady—What a polite little boy you are.
Kid—Yes'm. I'm in training to be a gentleman burglar.

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Climbing the Barrier.

(Continued from page nine.)

Worth looked, and saw a column of smoke curling upward from beyond the summit of the mountain. He stared a few moments, and then said: "It would look as if the island yonder is inhabited."

"Yes, yes!" cried Genie. "Oh, perhaps it is father and the others that were with him. Let's go across to the island at once," and she would have hastened down to the cabin to get ready, but Worth told her to wait.

"We don't know but that the people on the island may be enemies," he said. "We had better take it slow, for there is no telling what kind of people we might find there."

"That's so," was the reply. "What would you advise?"

"That we wait here, and keep watch of the island for awhile, and then, if in a few days we see no signs of any one, I will go over there and investigate."

"I don't want to wait that long," said Genie. "It might be that father and some of the others are there, and want assistance in the way of food, so let us investigate sooner."

"Very well. I'll go over to the island tonight, if you will not be afraid to stay here alone."

"I wouldn't be afraid, but would rather go with you."

"We will see about it, this evening. I think, however, that it would be better for me to go alone."

When evening came, Genie said that she wanted to accompany Worth on the trip to the island, but he did not think it best, and argued that it might be dangerous for her, as the people who started the fire might be enemies. Genie presently admitted that perhaps he was right, and that she would remain on the island, as she would not be afraid to stay alone, there being nobody around to be afraid of.

"You be careful, and don't get into any trouble, however," said Genie. "I wouldn't like to be left here alone for any great length of time."

"I will make an investigation, see who the people are, and get back as quickly as possible," was the reply.

Worth went down to the water's edge, Genie accompanying him, and getting aboard the little raft, took up the paddle, and pushed away from the shore. When he was out fifteen or twenty feet from the shore, he said, "Good-by; don't be afraid or lonesome. I'll get back as soon as possible."

"Good-by," was the reply, and Genie stood there, gazing after Worth till he was a quarter of a mile away, at least. There was a look of commingled fear and sadness on her face, and it would have puzzled the most expert judge of womankind to come anywhere near guessing what was in her mind.

Presently she went back to the cabin, and entering, sat down and looked about her. One would have expected to see a look of dislike of her surroundings, but somehow such was not the case. She seemed to let her eyes dwell on the rude articles of furniture, the chairs, the table, and so forth, as though they met with her approval. She remained up an hour or so, and then went to her room and to bed, though not to sleep. Her mind was on Worth and his errand. She wondered if he would find her father, or any of the other members of the party, or whether he would find strange people, who might be hostile. She would not acknowledge it, even to herself, but she was really fearful that Worth might get into trouble.

One, two, three hours passed, and there was no sound of Worth returning. Another hour passed, and still there was no sound of him, and she rose and presently made her way down to the shore and looked in the direction of the large island.

She saw nothing of Worth, although she could see the dim outlines of the island in the distance, it being almost like semi-twilight, and had the first mate been on the water between the islands, she could have seen him. She stood there for a few minutes, gazing across toward the island, and then was about to turn around to return to the cabin, when she heard footsteps behind her. Turning quickly, she found herself standing face to face with—the second mate, Robert Ralston.

CHAPTER XI.

A PUZZLE FOR WORTH.

Worth paddled across the ten miles of water that lay between the islands, and slowly approached the shore of the large island. When he reached the shore, he leaped off the raft and tied the rope to a tree, so as to keep it from floating away. Then he turned his face inland, and started up the slope toward the top of the mountain. It would be quite a climb, but he had plenty of time, and gradually worked his way up through the timber and undergrowth till he was at the top, when he paused and took a survey of his surroundings. He gazed downward, in the direction of the farther shore of the island, looking to see if he could sight a camp, from which point the smoke ascended that he and Genie had seen.

He did not see any campfire, however. It was so warm that a fire was needed only for cooking and not for warmth, and after a careful survey, Worth went slowly down the slope, picking his way carefully. He was perhaps halfway down, when on emerging rather suddenly into an open space, he found himself almost upon perhaps ten or twelve men, who were lying on blankets, asleep. On his appearance, however, several of them rose quickly to a sitting posture, with exclamations of amazement:

"Who are you?"

"What do you want?"

"Where did you come from?"

As they spoke, they leaped to their feet and sprang forward and seized Worth, and held him, despite his struggles.

"Let go!" he said. "This is no way to receive a friend."

"How do we know you're a friend?" replied one. "You may be an enemy." Then he called out, to his companions, who were just struggling to their feet; "Here is a stranger, men. Get a rope and tie his arms, and then we will question him."

One of the men brought a rope and tied Worth's hands, though he protested. "Why make a prisoner of me?" he asked. "I have told you I come as a friend."

"Yes, but we want to make sure of it," was the reply. "After you have explained who you are and why you are here, then perhaps we shall let you go free again."

They surrounded him, and told him to sit down and take it easy, while they questioned him.

"What is your name?" asked the one who seemed to be leader.

"Richard Worth," was the reply, after a moment's hesitation.

"How came you here?"

"I was a member of a party that came down here in search of the South Pole."

"Humph. Where are the other members of the party?"

"I don't know."

"Why don't you?"

Worth was silent a few moments, and then explained about the manner in which the party had been split up by the shattering of the plateau by the volcanic action when the island came up to the surface, and the men listened with interest.

"And you left the girl over on the island, eh?" said the leader of the party, in a reflective sort of way.

"Yes, and I will return as soon as you set me free. She will be afraid if I don't return pretty soon."

"I will talk it over with my men, and decide whether we shall let you go," was the reply. He drew his men to one side and they talked awhile in low tones, after which they returned and the leader cut the rope, freeing Worth's arms.

"You are free," he said.

"Thanks," said Worth. "And now, if you don't mind, I wish you would tell me who you men are and where you came from?"

"We were sailors on a ship that was making a passage around Cape Horn a few weeks ago, and the ship was wrecked, but we managed to reach the Ice Plateau, after having been blown several hundred miles by the tornado. We climbed the Barrier and came to the open water, and seeing the island, came to it."

"What are you going to do—stay here, or try to get back to the outer world?"

"We haven't decided what to do. We haven't very many provisions, but have found some wild vegetables and fruits, and doubtless could live here as long as we like, so we are not in any hurry to leave. We might not be able to reach the mainland of South America, and might get lost in the ocean, in a storm. We are comfortable here, and have been figuring on building a cabin and staying awhile."

"Why don't you come over here and stay with us, you and the young lady?" asked one of the men. "You must be kind of lonely over there, aren't you?"

"Well, not to such a great extent as one would think," was the reply. "We keep figuring on trying to get back to the outer world, and so don't let ourselves get lonely. As we may make a start, it would not be worth while to come over here. And besides, I don't know whether the young lady would like to come or not."

The men did not pursue the subject further. Worth noted, with considerable satisfaction, that they were not ruffianly-looking, but seemed to be fairly good-looking, on an average, to be intelligent beyond the usual style of men found on sailing vessels, for it is difficult to get sailors for ships of that kind nowadays, the men not liking the old style of pulling and hauling sails.

"Well, if you should decide to come over and join us, do so," said the man who seemed to be the leader. "We'll treat you right."

"Thanks, but it is likely that we shall try to reach the mainland, though it will depend on whether the Ice Queen puts in an appearance."

"It looks as if there is not much likelihood that the ship will return," said the other, after a few moments. "The chances are that the party with which was the girl's father, was lost, and the other party reached the ship and sailed away. In which event, it will not return, for the men will likely claim the ship, sell it in some foreign port, and di-

(Continued on page 15.)

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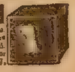

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CHAPTER XXI.

A HOT INTERVIEW.

RICHARD VILLAINDON sat in his den rubbing his hands in a joyful manner. He had been reading the news of the capture of the "boy murderer" by the newly elected sheriff, and seemed very much pleased.

"It was the only way, after all my plans to dispose of the boy have signally failed," mused the rich man. "I should have liked it better if this publicity could have been avoided, but that is out of the question now, and we must face the facts as they come up. Ralph will be easily convicted; doubtless go up for life, after which I shall be perfectly safe."

The great man got no further. His office door was crowded open and a man crossed the threshold and faced him—a man, tall and straight, with keen, flashing eyes and smoothly shaven face. Even Ralph, who had met him many times, would scarcely have recognized his friend Godfrey with his whiskers gone.

"Good evening, Dick."

"Eh?" with a violent start. "It cannot be that the ocean has given up its dead. Ethan Godfrey, is it indeed you?"

The color left the timberman's face and he trembled excitedly.

"Oh, it's I all right, all right," and the visitor sat down, smiling defiantly.

"Well, indeed. I am glad to see you."

Villaindon held out a shaking hand. His visitor seemed not to notice it.

"How are things since I saw you last, Dick?" queried the visitor, never once taking his eyes off the other.

"All right, Mr. Godfrey——"

"You have prospered wonderfully it seems."

"I will not deny it."

"On another's money, eh?"

The millionaire frowned and looked daggers.

"I'm not making confidants of common book clerks," he sneered. "It would have been better for you, Ethan, if you had perished at sea——"

"As you meant I should when you tossed me overboard in a tropical storm. Don't squirm, it won't help you a bit. I have been back for some time, but my head wasn't exactly straight; I've got over the brain trouble now and am here to ask after Hiram Overton's boy."

"I know nothing about him."

"He was left to your care when his mother died. I know all about it, you know I do, that was why you tried to murder me. I am back now to set things right."

"I don't know what you mean."

"Yes, you do. You let Hiram's son go to the poorhouse while you used the fortune left him by old Granther Ethridge to feather your own nest."

"You talk in riddles," sneered the rich man, gathering courage from a feeling that he was comparatively safe.

"There'll be something beside riddles before I am done. The son of my friend Hiram is even now in the city prison charged with murder. This is your work, hoping to get him off the earth so that you can enjoy your stolen goods in peace. That might have worked had I not been picked up at sea and come back to America to fight for the rights of my employer's son. You must see that Ralph Overton is set free, that he is restored to his right, or you will hear something drop."

A burst of defiant laughter greeted this last.

"Oh, you may laugh, Dick Villaindon, but your race is run, I am willing to compromise, to allow you to live, if you will renounce your claims and get out of the country for good."

"My claims!" with a sneer. "Why, you insignificant little whippersnapper, I am absolutely in possession; I am a millionaire thrice over; I do not care a snap for your silly cock-and-bull story. No one would believe it——"

"Hold on. The identity of this boy is easily proved."

"Even if it is, that does not affect me."

"Nor the fact that Lawrence K. Ethridge left an immense fortune to his grandson, Ralph Overton, you being the boy's guardian——"

"There was no such fortune left to the boy; instead it was left unreservedly to me, as the records will show. Even if the Overton boy is alive, he gets nothing."

"But his grandfather's will——"

"No such will exists."

"You forget the Cross of St. Glebe."

At this the millionaire started and trembled. "Bah!" he finally sneered. "That cross was destroyed when she, the mother died. You can't frighten me that way, Ethan. To you I am willing to admit that I have done some sharp work, and it has prospered me. You were the only person who knew the secret of the cross——"

"That it contains the last will and testament of Granther Ethridge, conveying vast property interests to his beloved grandson, Ralph Overton."

"Yes, even that, Godfrey. I ought to know something about it, since I was the old East Indian's attorney and confidential adviser."

"Yes, and as such drew up his will; also had yourself appointed guardian so that you might get the property into your own clutches. While I was only the confidential clerk of Mr. Ethridge I saw things that looked bad. As a witness to his will I knew all about conditions——"

"Even if you did it matters little now. You can do nothing."

"By George, I can and will!" exclaimed the visitor, rising to his feet, shaking a warning finger in the face of the timberman. "I know all your villainy, Richard Villaindon, all your scheming to win from the boy heir his grandfather's property. The mother married Overton against the wish of her father; he spurned and disowned her for that——"

"True as preaching, Ethan," broke in Villaindon. "That was why he disinherited her and left his property to me."

"You old liar!"

Both men were becoming very much excited.

"Go about your business, Ethan," finally flung out the millionaire. "You are powerless to do anything. Denounce me if you will, I defy you. A poor confidential clerk would never have a ghost of a show as against a rich business man like me, be sure of that."

"I am no longer poor," corrected the visitor. "I have made a decent pile since you saw me in the far East. I can procure the ablest lawyers in the States to fight this boy's claim to the limit, which I shall do, unless——"

"Unless what?" bending eagerly forward.

"Unless you make restitution to the boy you have robbed."

"I deny your premises——"

"Your denial counts for nothing——"

"See here, Ethan Godfrey; listen to me."

"Very well, only be brief."

"I'll be brief and to the point. Draw off and let things take their course and I'll give you a deed to the best quarter-section of pine in Northern Michigan, and that means a small fortune."

"Too small to sway me in my search for justice," retorted the other.

The rich man's face went white. He rose to his feet, as he pointed to the door.

"Go!" he thundered. "I defy you to do your worst. This boy you pretend to think so much of is in prison charged with murder; the evidence is conclusive; he cannot escape a life sentence; that fixes his earthly status forever. I am safely intrenched in my position and shall never again give you an opportunity to make good. Leave now, and never darken my doors again."

"That boy is not guilty——"

A jeering laugh met this attempt to stay the move of events on the part of the old clerk of the house of Ethridge.

"You will have to prove that, which you can't do. I have every avenue for young Overton's escape shut off. It will be well for you to go from here in a quiet manner and not again show your head. Refuse and something may happen, even to you."

Pausing on the threshold Godfrey turned back, saying: "I doubt not your will to murder me as you attempted to do years ago. Since your chance to drown Ralph Overton failed you have put up this murder charge. It won't work. I shall not be idle. I am going from here to find the Cross of St. Glebe!"

The man was gone and Villaindon sat alone in his den. A thousand and one haunting memories afflicted him. The Cross of St. Glebe, if found by another, would surely prove his undoing. But could it be found? He was confident that the boy who now lay imprisoned once had the cross. He had lost it. Very likely it was at the bottom of Roaring Run. It surely could not come up to injure him in the future. With the heir to his stolen wealth safely behind penitentiary walls all would be well.

A step sounded, the door again opened, and his sister confronted him.

"What did that man want?" she demanded in some excitement.

"Something he did not get, my dear."

"You knew him——"

"Yes, of course. He has come back to threaten me, but I refused to cringe. I shall attend to his case after the boy goes up."

The woman shuddered.

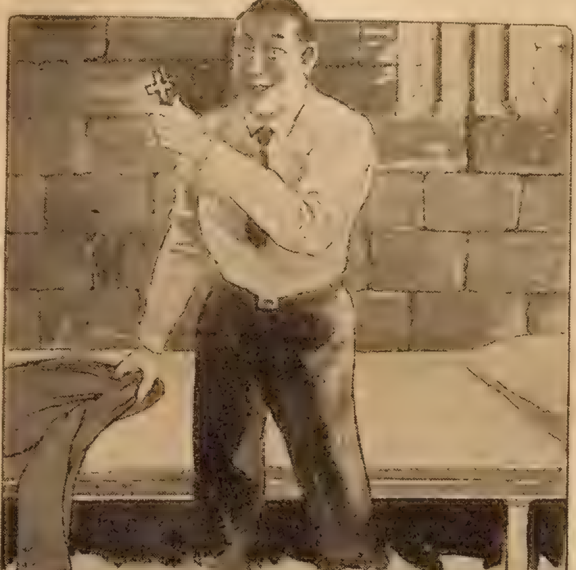
"We have been doing things that sicken me, Richard."

"No silly whining now, Annace," he broke in. "I won't stand for it, not for a minute. I am sorry I ever made a confidante of you, old girl. It was unfortunate for me, very."

He waved her off and she went out sniveling.

"Blame the women, anyhow," snarled the timberman, rising and pacing the floor.

Meanwhile Ralph Overton lay in the county jail suffering the tortures of innocence confined behind prison bars. Soon after entering his cell the boy flung himself down upon his cot in a paroxysm of grief and indignation. He lay here but a short time when the consciousness of great bodily inconvenience came



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to him. A sharp ridge seemed cutting into the small of his back. The boy got up, shook down the narrow mattress, then lay down again. The hard substance again irritated his flesh.

"Ugh! Such a hard bed!"

The boy again examined his mattress. He felt no ridge and wondered if all his ill feeling came from his imagination. He flung himself down for the third time, then bounded up with his hand pressed to the small of his back.

"My goodness!" he exclaimed. "It is there, under my coat. Whew! I do believe my backbone has come loose!"

Ralph, however, soon discovered the cause of all his bad feeling—a hard substance within the lining of his coat, well down to the lower seam.

"Wonder what 'tis," he muttered, fingering the object eagerly.

He felt for his knife, ready to slit the seam and rid himself of the obnoxious protuberance.

He remembered with chagrin that the prison guard had robbed him of knife and other pocket pieces, "not to leave anything with which he could injure himself," the jailer had explained.

Ralph worked long and earnestly trying to get the hard substance from beneath the lining of his coat.

He did not succeed till he applied his teeth to the hem. After considerable gnawing and pulling, a good sized rip was made and the obnoxious object fell into the boy's hand.

Ralph held up his find to the light from the hall shining through the grating over his cell door. A great, glad cry fell from his lips.

"Found! found! the Cross of St. Glebe!"

CHAPTER XXII.

THE MAGNANIMITY OF A BOY.

Luckily, soon after his find, a boy and man came to see Ralph in prison—Mr. Godfrey and Peg Tugwell.

The prisoner had kept the cross hidden beneath his mattress till these two friends came, to whom he confided what had happened.

"So you had the cross in your coat all the time," laughed Fatty Tugwell.

"It seems so," admitted Ralph.

The face of Godfrey brightened. In fact, he walked on air now that the precious cross had come to light. He explained how the old East Indian, Ralph's grandfather, had hidden his will, written on onion paper, within a secret hollow of the cross

"He gave it to your mother after he had become reconciled to her," said Mr. Godfrey, "and told her to part with it only with death. I alone, and one other, the old grandther's solicitor, knew of the secret of the cross. Mr. Ethridge trusted us implicitly."

"And my mother," cried Ralph; "did she not know?"

"Not a thing. She was to hold the cross in keeping for you till you came of age, when it was to be turned over and the solicitor and myself were to see that the provisions of the will were carried out."

"Then, when I come of age I am to inherit my grandfather's wealth?" queried the boy prisoner, his eyes glistening.

"Such is the provision of the will which is folded inside the long arm of this cross, my boy. It is intact you see," and by touching a hidden spring the cross of ebony and gold flew open, revealing a hollow in which lay, snugly rolled, a considerable sheet of paper.

Mr. Godfrey opened and read the document, attested before the proper officer and signed by two witnesses, one being Ethan Godfrey, former private secretary to Grandfather Ethridge. Fatty and Ralph listened in astonishment to the reading of the will.

"So you are now a rich kid!" exclaimed Peg, wringing the prisoner's hand.

"Yet homeless and in prison!" returned Ralph in bitter tones.

"Wait. Trust me to secure justice, my boy," said Mr. Godfrey. "Peg here will accept a part of the responsibility; we will work together. Is that all right, Ralph, my boy?"

"All right," agreed the prisoner. And then the turnkey came and ordered the visitors to depart.

With them went a part of the load that had so long oppressed our hero. He knew now the full villainy of the master of Highland Hall. The money with which he had built up a fortune had been stolen from his (Ralph's) grandfather's fortune. Would Mr. Godfrey and Tug be able, even with the testimony of that last will and testament, to oust the wicked usurper and save him from the penitentiary?

The day of trial came and Ralph Overton entered the courtroom to stand trial for the wilful murder of Gilbert Gragdon.

Ethan Godfrey had used his best efforts to save Ralph from this ordeal by starting proceedings against Villaindon to oust him from his ill-gotten fortune. The attorney for the defense, however, assured the ex-secretary that no matter how much a villain the timberman might be, that fact did not mitigate Ralph Overton's crime by a hair's breadth.

"If he really killed the foreman he cannot escape just punishment, even though he should fall heir to a billion," he said.

And so the trial went on. The evidence all pointed to the prisoner as guilty; even he made no denial of his quarrel with the foreman, admitting the enmity between them, and that he had pushed him over the brink of Roaring Run. The case was all in and argued; it would go to the jury immediately after noon. Villaindon encountered Godfrey in the anteroom.

"Play your game to the end, you old scamp," growled the timberman, "I can worst you in the end, and the boy will go up for life!" With that the millionaire hurried from the building.

Godfrey was in the dumps as he came from the courtroom. Peg came hustling up and plucked at the secretary's sleeve.

"This way, old chap," cried the fat boy, his jolly form shaking with excitement. "I want to show you something."

Immediately after two o'clock the courtroom was again crowded. The jury had received their charge and were about to file from the room when counsel for the defense arose and said: "May it please the court, I would like to bring forward another witness."

Objection was of course made by the prosecution.

"Unless there is entire new evidence, vital to the safety of the prisoner," said the judge, "the case as submitted, must stand."

"Sure," uttered the prosecutor, sotto voce.

The defendant's counsel turned toward the entrance to the courtroom through which a man was making his way, worming his steps toward the bar.

"I leave your honor to judge as to the vital importance of our new witness," said the attorney, smiling blandly.

"Too late; the case is closed!" growled the prosecutor. Villaindon stirred uneasily in his seat, gazing toward the newcomer. The moment he caught sight of his face he uttered a startled cry and started to leave the room.

"I am here, your honor, to prove the innocence of the accused!" cried the man, who had by this time crowed nearly to the bench, a tall man, with rugged features, pale from recent illness. He waved his hand aloft, smiling this way and that.

"I told you I'd fetch him!" shouted Fatty Tugwell, beaming all over his fat face.

"Sir, who are you?" demanded the now frowning judge

"I am Gilbert Gragdon for whose murder this boy is held!"

This was true. Of course, the jury never had to act upon the case, and our boy hero was at once set free.

When the supposed murdered man told his story everything was made plain.

He had fallen into the Run as described, but a jutting rock held him for a moment above the whirling deluge.

"While I lay there, half stunned," proceeded the foreman, "all my past misdeeds swept over me. I was little better than a murderer myself; had in fact tried twice to kill young Overton. With the roar of the torrent in my ears I resolved to turn my back from my wicked course. Rocks and stones rolled into the water, these making the noise Ralph thought my body. I got away without being seen and went to Chicago.

"Here I was sick a long time in a hospital. When able to travel I read by chance an account of the arrest and trial of young Overton for my murder. I at once came on here, saw Peg, whom I knew, and we hastened here as you see."

Ralph was grateful to the one time foreman for his escape. Two days later four persons sat in confab at the house on Grass Flats—Godfrey and Gragdon, together with Ralph and Peg. Jill was not far away, the happiest one in the whole company. Her boy hero had come out of the fiery ordeal without spot or blemish.

The four were discussing ways and means for the future, Gragdon being in full accord with the rest.

"I wonder who the man was who was taken for you," said Ralph. "Surely there was a body found."

"No doubt," agreed the ex-foreman. "The job was cleverly put up by Villaindon. He furnished the cadaver you may be sure, and fixed the identity. He is as sharp as he is rascally, but we shall have him on the hip very soon. There was a will leaving you great wealth, you tell me, Ralph. I am sincerely glad for your good fortune, and hope you will remember me not unkindly when you come into your own, which you soon will do."

Our boy hero shook his head.

"We have the cross, with its hidden will, all right," said he, "but this alone doesn't seem to be enough. There was a packet of papers, valuable ones, that if I had them now, would aid in convicting Villaindon. We've got him to fight——"

"Lost papers, eh?" spoke the ex-foreman. "I wonder if this has anything to do with them," and he produced a soiled packet of oiled silk. "I found this on the path as I escaped from the Run, and have kept it ever since, thinking it might be of use to somebody."

Ethan Godfrey reached out and grasped the packet, his eyes gleaming excitedly. He opened the silk covering, unfolding papers dingy with much wear.

"Eureka!" he cried, "the lost deeds and affidavits! Richard Villaindon is checkmated at last! Boy, boy, let me congratulate you!" and the old secretary sprang up, encircled Ralph with his thin arms, and circled about the room in a wild dance much resembling the fisher's hornpipe.

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Jill stood now in the open doorway, watching he dance with wide, staring eyes, while her brother burst into an amused laugh.

* * *

A whitefaced man stood on the dock at Bay Haven.

"Row me quick as you can to yonder steamer!" cried the man to a gaunt young fisherman whose boat had just come in.

Man and fisherman had gone well out into the bay when a man and boy came swiftly to the edge of the dock—Ethan Godfrey and Ralph Overton.

"Was it him you was looking for?"

A man climbed from a rocking clinker and faced the late arrivals.

"We were seeking Mr. Villaindon," said Godfrey.

"You'll have to catch Sim's boat then. The old boss is off for the West; I heard him say it. He looked white and scared——"

"We'll get him yet," uttered the ex-secretary, pulling out his wallet. "Take us to that steamer, man, and "

A hand plucking at the speaker's sleeve cut short Godfrey's speech.

"Never mind, Mr. Godfrey," said Ralph. "Let him go. I prefer to come into my property without knowing that a fellow being is suffering imprisonment because of any evil he has done me. Again I say, let him go."

The man regarded the lad in plain astonishment.

"Why, boy, after he twice tried to murder you; after he stole your fortune, he ought to be punished——"

"Let him go, sir, let him go; I shall be happier if you do."

'Well, since it is beyond his power to harm you more, and for the sake of his sister, I will do as you say. Of course, since the court has appointed me your executor and guardian, I could dissent, but it is my highest wish to do by you everything that best pleases you."

Man and boy retraced their steps from the dock.

"There is no danger of Villaindon ever coming back," said Ralph, as the two walked into town. "I have arranged everything for a thorough prosecution of timber-cutting up at Hardridge Camp——"

"Of course; I understand, Ralph, and it's all right."

"Even to Gragdon's going back as foreman?" and Ralph laughed

"Yes, even to that, for if ever a man was truly repentant Gil Gragdon is that man."

"I have talked with Peg and Jill, too."

"Indeed!"

"They will live at Highland Hill, Jill to see to the inside while Peg oversees the grounds. I'm going to have all my friends with me, sir."

"Good boy, good boy," chuckled the executor; "like your mother in every respect. We shall all have a grand good time, and some day ——"

"Some day what, Mr. Godfrey?" asked Ralph.

"Some day that brown-eyed Miss Tugwell will grace Highland Hall as its mistress, I could swear"

"No profanity, Mr. Godfrey," cried our hero, clasping his companion's hand and going forward with a little shout to meet two coming people, Peg Tugwell and his sister Jill.

The end.

* * *

Climbing the Barrier.

(Continued from page twelve.)

vide the money and ship on different vessels for various points in the world."

"That is likely the truth," said Worth, "but we will keep hoping that the ship may return."

A little later Worth bade them good-by and took his departure, and by energetic use of the paddle, he succeeded in getting back to the little island a little after midnight.

Tying the rope to a tree, he made his way rapidly up the path to the cabin, and opening the door, stepped inside. He lighted a candle, and stood listening a few moments, looking toward the door of Genie's room. The fact was, that he had made somewhat more noise than was necessary on entering, for the purpose of awakening Genie, and letting her know he was back, and he was somewhat surprised that she did not open the door and appear, for he judged that she would be curious regarding the result of his trip to the large island.

Not hearing any sound, he presently called out, in a moderately-loud voice; "Miss Worth, are you awake?"

There was no answer, and after waiting a few moments Worth again called, louder this time. Still there was no reply, and suddenly he was struck by a feeling of fear of he knew not what, and acting on the impulse of the moment, strode to the door and quickly opened it and glanced inside. His one quick glance was sufficient to reveal to him a startling fact: Genie's bunk was empty. She was not in the room, was missing!

He stepped back, and looked about him half-dazedly. Genie was gone, that was evident, but—where had she gone? And why?

This powerful story will be continued in the next week's Ledger. Do not miss reading it. A lot of great and timely stories will appear in the Ledger during this year. Send in your subscription and you will find yourself repaid ten times over.

* * *

The Ghost of the Abbey.

(Continued from page eight.)

and keeping up the good old customs of Myrene's forefathers.

"Christmas will always be the happiest time of all the year to me, for it was then that we first met," said the girl softly as she looked with love-laden eyes upon her handsome sunburnt companion.

"You are really content, dear one, to share your life with me—a flagrant impostor who won your love under false pretenses?" asked Denis tenderly, as he put his arms about the beautiful girl beside him and drew her flower-like face within easy distance of his lips.

"My own dear impostor!" murmured Myrene fondly, as she nestled happily against her lover's breast.

The end.

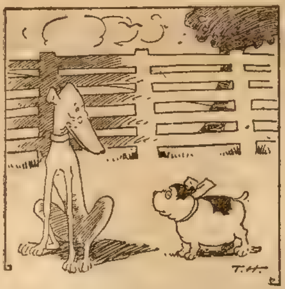
* * *

Woman to Be Superior.

In "Thais" the keynote of the entire performance is the struggle for mastery between the animal and spiritual nature of Damiel, the anchorite, and this struggle is going on today the same as it was in the fourth century, says Albert Ellery Bergh in the Columbian Magazine. It is not a question as to whether a man has an immortal soul or not, but it is a question of his higher nature dominating his brutal instincts. The average man even today is three-fourths animal. He follows his instincts rather than his intellect. The position of woman has been very much raised since she was considered a mere chattel, a plaything and slave. Even in China today, according to the religion of Confucius, a woman is a mere animal without a soul, and is merely considered in the light of a necessity to perpetuate the race.

On the other hand, it is a question whether woman is not destined eventually in civilized countries to take a higher position than man. If what Thomas A. Edison claims is true—that we may be developing a sixth sense—woman is certainly nearer to that development than the lord of creation, for that sixth sense promises to be nothing more or less than a development of intuition, which, as we all know, is believed at present to be essentially a feminine characteristic. However, there have been very few great artists, musicians, painters or writers who have not had something of the nature of feminine intuition.

* * *



Egbert (the poodle)—I'm getting dreadfully stout and I'd do anything to be slim like you. How do you manage it?

Ribs, (the greyhound)—Just a simple little exercise that you ought to take up. I jump that ten foot fence twenty times a day.

* * *

The Vanilla Plant.

The vanilla plant is the only orchid of any industrial value As orchids go, the plant is not unattractive, for the foliage is much greener and more enduring than in the case of most of the species. It is a climber, and when the leaves are fresh it brightens a small tree trunk wonderfully. The vanilla planifolia, to give it its full name, is a terrestrial parasite. It climbs from the ground, but, once established, has feeding stations on the bark all along the line. The leaves—long, very smooth and light green—are alternate, and at the axil of each is a sucker, a few inches in length, that fastens itself securely to the tree, lying flat against the bark.

The blossoms are inconspicuous. It is the resultant pods that are the vanilla of the industrial world. They are slim pods six to eight inches long, and, when dried for the market, are of a rich deep reddish, but without warrant. They contain no bean; the seed in them is as fine as dust. These seeds are the black specks that are usually found in the finest grade of vanilla ice cream, the best chefs the world over preferring to grind the "bean" rather than use the extract. Vanilla is found growing wild in the Bahamas, West Indies and Central America. In Madagascar and some of the neighboring islands it has been introduced, and now forms an important article of export. But American vanilla is the best.

* * *

They Should Not Marry.

The woman who buys for the mere pleasure of buying.

The woman who expects to have "a good, easy time."

The woman who thinks that cook and nurse can keep house.

The woman who would die rather than wear last season's hat.

The woman who expects a declaration of love three times a day.

The woman who marries in order to have some one to pay her bills.

The woman who reads novels, and dreams of being a duchess or a countess.

The woman who thinks she can get $5,000 worth of style out of a $1,000 income.

The woman who does not know how many pennies, nickels and dimes go to make a dollar .

The woman who proudly declares that she cannot even hem a pocket handkerchief, and never made up a bed in her life.

The woman who cares more for the style of her spring suit than she cares for the health and comfort of her children.

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A LOST VACATION.

"It was in a hotel in Buffalo," said Joe Mix. "I had started on a ten days' vacation—the first one I had been given in six years. There as I sat in the hotel lobby I saw a boyhood friend—James Randolph Rising. I hadn't seen him before since we went to school together.

"Jimmy Rising seemed glad to see me and we sat there for an hour talking over old time acquaintances. Then suddenly my boyhood friend changed the subject and began to tell me of himself. He was in the insurance business with his brother in New York, he said, but had come to Buffalo on a little deal of his own that was still hanging fire. At that moment he was waiting for the mail to be distributed so that he could get a draft that would be at the general delivery window from his brother.

"At first the point to all this conversation about himself had been hidden like one of the missing faces in a picture puzzle, but I began to see a great light. When I looked at him again he was sizing me up out of the tail of his eye.

"'I suppose you could let me have a ten spot till the evening mail's distributed, couldn't you?' he asked. 'I'll have plenty of money as soon as I get the letter from my brother, but I feel queer going around now without any cash in my pocket.'

"Well, I'd never made a habit of intrusting money to strangers, but Jimmy Rising wasn't exactly a stranger. We found out that I'd have plenty of time to buy my ticket and get to the boat after the New York mail had been distributed. After I'd let him take the ten I noticed that the clothes of my boyhood acquaintance had a sort of creaseless, worried look about them, but I let that pass.

"The minute he got my money in his hand he became the prince of good fellows. He gave me to understand that he would buy our dinner and the accouterments. We looked about the city a bit and I wasn't allowed to spend so much as carfare. Take notice of that. Nothing went but his money. And yet, aside from the ten spot I'd lent him, he didn't have the total sum of fifteen cents. But he showed me the town and I merely financed his hospitality.

"We stood around the postoffice till all the New York mail was up and the man at the little general delivery window said there wasn't any mail for James R. Rising.

"'I don't see what could have delayed that draft,' remarked Jimmy in a slightly vexed tone. 'Oh, well, it's sure to be here in the morning, so I shan't worry about it.'

"I decided to wait over and thus save him the bother of making out a money order, when the draft arrived. Also I thought the percentage of chance of getting back my ten would be more in my favor if I was right on the ground. Jimmy said he was glad to have my company, as it had looked like a lonesome evening ahead for him.

"'I'll buy a couple of seats for the show,' he suggested.

There wasn't any opportunity to spend money and show me a pleasant time that he overlooked. So we went to a cafe and buying me a small shower of food, meanwhile borrowing a little matter of $5 more. So things went. When it came time to turn in it occurred to me that it would be a good plan to keep James Randolph Rising with me, for fear we might miss each other in the morning and I wouldn't know where to find him after that draft arrived. So I invited him to stay with me at the hotel. He wasn't registered there

"On our way to the hotel we met a man with a brindle bull pup to sell for $11. Nothing would do but James Randolph Rising must have that dog. He said it had just the right sort of undershot jaw and a noble shape of head that was extremely difficult to find in a bulldog.

"'Just let me have about $15,' he says to me casually, as if asking for a match, 'and I'll hand you $30 in the morning.'

"Great object to me, you understand. By letting him have another $15 I would have $30 coming to me in the morning when he cashed that draft, instead of the $15 he already owed me. Anyhow, I didn't like to make him sore, and then he and the dog seemed to have taken a wonderful fancy to each other, so I handed him $15. When we got to the hotel I registered for my companion—my host for the evening—and told the clerk to put it all on my bill. Then I looked around for Jimmy and he had disappeared—probably, I figured, to find some place to keep the dog over night. In a minute he returned without the dog.

"'You never saw anybody more tickled,' he remarked with a merry, rippling chuckle.

"'Who, the dog?'

"'The bartender back there. I heard him say that he had two little girls that were crazy for a dog, so I just gave it to him.'

"Think that over. Me, that never felt I could afford a dog, putting up for an ugly little gargoyle-faced pup for a bartender, a total stranger with whom I had nothing at all in common!

"Owing to some slip or other, the draft didn't come that morning. We spent the entire day just sitting around the postoffice steps thinking it surely would come on a later mail, but it didn't.' I said we put in the entire day on the postoffice steps. I'll amend that. We went away for our meals. Of course, I had to put up for all the meals, either directly or indirectly. James Randolph Rising would insist on paying for them most of the time, but he'd do it with money he'd borrow from me. I was for going to cheap lunch counters, but my boyhood friend didn't like to eat at such places.

"At the end of a week, most of which we put in around the postoffice steps in Buffalo, I found that James Randolph Rising had cost me $47, besides $50 that I'd lent him. And my vacation was nearly over. Each day, each hour he had assured me that nothing short of a miracle could prevent that draft coming ere nightfall, and back I'd go to the postoffice. I didn't want to abandon my investment and then keep thinking that probably the draft came an hour or so after I caught my boat. My idea was to be on hand when the draft was cashed and get mine, so I just stayed and stayed and stayed. But when I found that my vaction was all gone except two or three days I began to think that I'd do well to get home in time to go to work the day after my vacation ended and before all my own money was gone. I mentioned the matter to my comrade.

"'By the way,' he began, in his breezy fashion—talking in the chipper, carefree tone of a telephone girl telling you that the line you want is busy—'why wouldn't it be a good scheme for you to let me have enough money to get me to New York and I can soon see what the trouble is. Then I can forward you a check covering the several little amounts that you have so kindly let me have and you will not need to delay here longer.'

"As a matter of fact, I had about decided that I stood the same chance of getting back anything I had lent to James Randolph Rising that I would to get a quarterly dividend from a foreign missionary society. Still I didn't like to get him down on me after making so large an investment in him. If $10 more would make him feel any like getting together the $100 he owed me it would be poor policy to refuse. I asked him how much he thought it would take to get him to New York. Oh, $15 would fix him nicely, he said. So I gave him $15. I still had a little more than that left out of my vacation fund. He went and consulted a time table.

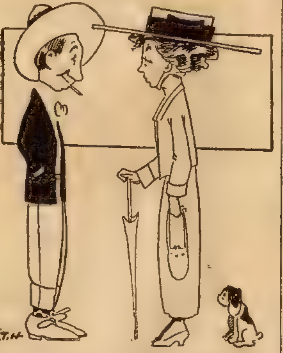
"'There's a train for New York in less than thirty minutes," he told me a moment later. 'I'll call a taxi and we'll go right down to the station.'

"Taxicab, mind you. Personally I've always struggled along with the vulgar street cars. But I said nothing and saw him take the train, thinking gleefully that I could soon return to Chicago and begin to save money again.

"The next day I was back home. Did I hear from James Randolp Rising? Yes, about a year later I got a souvenir postal card from him that he had mailed on the train while en route to California.

"'Just been passing through a stretch of country that God forgot,' he wrote. Best regards.' And that was every word he said."

* * *



He—I don't object to your kissing Fido, but I prefer you to kiss me before and not after.

She—But don't you suppose Fido has his preference, too?

* * *

Her Lucky Day.

A lady, cycling in Scotland, broke her eye-glass chain and asked at a village shop for a new one. The woman said she had nothing but a string of old glass beads, which she did not want to sell, but would take 15 shillings for it. The cyclist paid it, and on returning to London she took her broken chain to a jeweler, who noticed the string of beads around her neck and offered her £500 for it. The lady declined, made inquiries, and found that she had become the possessor of a string of pearls which Mary, Queen of Scots, had worn on the scaffold, and which had since disappeared. She sold them ultimately for £15,000, and gave a proportion to the Scottish shopkeeper. It is this last item alone which makes this charming story read like a fairy tale.

* * *

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TAPE-WORM EXPELLED WITH HEAD. FREE BOOKLET. BYRON FIELD & CO. 120 So. STATE ST., CHICAGO, ILL.

The Voice From the Dead.

(Continued from page two.)

Miller did not heed the interruption but continued, staring straight before him with half-mad eyes:

"We met no one, and reached the river. Here the wheel broke. Jack ordered me to stay there, and he took Mary in his arms and went to the river. It was frozen solid. At four different places he tried to break the ice, but it was too thick. Then walking to the center of the stream, there under the bridge, he left her with a farewell kiss. He figured out that when the body was found, the broken neck would be explained by the supposition that she had leaped from the top of the bridge to the ice below."

For awhile neither spoke. Tears were coursing unheeded down their cheeks. Miller was the first to recover:

"On our return we found Dora unconscious. Terror and grief had been too much for her. Fortunately, for me, Jack being a doctor, we did not need to send for another physician, though he had to work a long time before she responded to his efforts to restore life. At last, however, she opened her eyes. Then, Taylor, took place a most heartbreaking scene. In losing Mary, whom she loved as a mother, she felt she had lost you, who were her very life. Her despair was terrible. Yet, when her brother told her she had to save me, she was ready. It was she, weak and heartbroken as she was, who insisted on going for you while Jack and I went to wake the city marshal. The rest you know. Now do with me what you please, I am ready to confess my crime and take the consequences."

"You must not confess!" cried Taylor in sudden resolution. "The innocent must not be made to suffer for the guilty. For Dora's and Jack's sake, I forbid you to speak!" and he was gone before Miller could say another word.

A week passed. Taylor scarcely left the sheriff's office, afraid as he was of a chance meeting with either his brother-in-law or with Jack. Dora, he knew, he could not meet, for the local papers had announced that the girl was critically ill over the shock. A strange battle was raging in Taylor's heart. In spite of the mysterious order given him in his unaccountable dream, he felt he never could marry Dora so long as Miller was alive. It would be impossible to forget that he was the man who had pushed Mary to her death. Many things might excuse the act before a jury, who would surely pronounce Miller innocent; but he, Taylor, could neither forgive nor forget, and hating the father he could not marry the daughter. Yet he loved her, more passionately today than ever before. But in spite of that love he could not bring himself to inquire about her, though he well guessed that his silence was killing her. Struggle as he would, he could not go to her, could not even write, for between them stood the man who had killed his sister.

It was the morning of the eighth day after the tragedy. The little town had settled itself to its normal quiet when another shock startled the inhabitants and silenced all the talk against the husband. John Miller had killed himself leaving a sealed letter addressed to Taylor.

Vincent heard the news with a feeling akin to relief. The guilty had punished himself; he could now return to the innocent. In five minutes he was at the house of death. Jack let him in, and without a word gave him the letter.

"Tell me about Dora!" said Taylor before reading.

"I have not told her yet," answered the young man in a hollow voice. "The shock will kill her unless you return to her. Read his letter; then see if you can save her."

The letter contained only a few lines:

"Taylor: If after I am gone you can forgive the living for the wrongs of the dead, return to Dora and Jack. Tonight I pay with my life my unintentional crime. Jack tells me Dora will die unless aroused from her torpor. I know what she wants, Vincent, it is you. In God's name, Taylor, don't make her responsible for my crime. Remember how Mary loved her, how she wanted you two to marry. Save my child, Taylor! Save her! It is hoping that you may which nerves my hand to this deed. Good-by.

"MILLER."

Taylor read the letter over a second time, then handed it to Jack saying: "Read!"

With the first words, Jack looked up startled: "Then you know the truth!"

"Yes."

"What are you going to do?"

"Go to Dora at once and tell her I cannot live without her."

Jack wrung his friend's hand, saying huskily: "Thank you; you are saving her life."

Three months later a very quiet wedding united the destinies of Vincent Taylor and Dora Miller. Taylor, though he never could explain that mysterious voice which had spoken to him in the night, always felt that his sister wished it thus.

* * *

Bishop's Mistake.

As illustrating how the simple facts of life are forgotten or overlooked by one whose mind is occupied with greater things, Rev. James L. Ford of New Orleans, who recently was in town, told this anecdote of the late Bishop Newman of Washington.

"I was a young curate in Washington," said Mr. Ford, according to the New York Times, "at the time the Memorial Church was being built. The bishop, at no little expense, had a set of chimes made, and it was his hope to have them ready in time for the dedication of the church.

"Well, the bells were delivered ahead of time by the makers, one of the best firms of its kind in the country, and men were being sent to hang them as soon as the belfry should be ready. But the bells were finished off plain, and this was not at all the bishop's idea of what church bells should be, so without telling any one he called in a local firm that did such work, and had inscribed on each bell a biblical quotation, appropriate to the chimes.

"A week or more later the belfry was ready. The makers sent their men to hang the bells, and the bishop engaged one of the best chime ringers in the country. He brought him on from Boston.

"As the time drew near the bell ringer took his seat at the bell board, and at a signal started to play. High up in the air began the most awful discord. The bishop dispatched a messenger post haste to order the performer to stop, for it was the bishop's idea that either the heat or something else had affected his playing.

"At the close of the ceremony, from which the chimes were omitted, the bellman was summoned to the bishop's study and the bishop demanded to know by what right he called himself an artist. The chime ringer became indignant, and replied it was the fault of the bells. He had played on bells from ocean to ocean and in the cathedrals of Europe, yet he never had seen such things as those in the belfry.

"'Impossible,' replied the bishop. 'Those bells were bought from the best firm in the country. The trouble was with the ringer, not with the bells.'

"The ringer would not have it so. His reputation was at stake, so the maker of the bells was sent for and the circumstances related to him. He sat down to play them, but at the first stroke he saw something was wrong. Up he hastened to the belfry to see what it was.

"The instant he saw the inscriptions he understood. The slightest cut or nick on a fine bell will ruin its tone, and in his desire to have them appropriate to their task the bishop had spoiled the entire set.

"The maker could do nothing with them, he said. They were good for nothing but old metal. For years they hung silent in the belfry and a new set was substituted."

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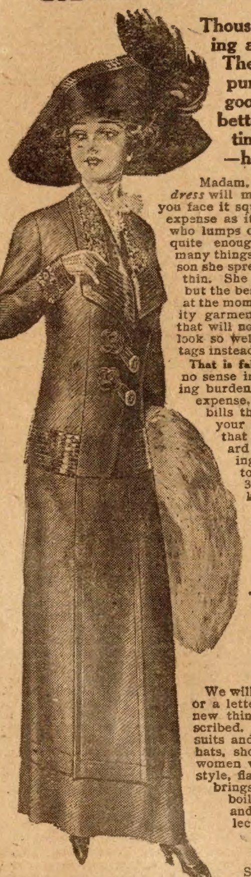

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FOR YOUTHFUL EYES

UNDERGROUND.

There was once a little boy named Jock, and he lived near the rocking stone. The rocking stone was a large bowlder perched on the top of a hill, so balanced that it would rock at the touch of a hand. Jock used to go often to the rock that rocked and set it going, and one day he thought, "I wonder what would happen if I pushed it just as hard as I possibly could and sent it tumbling down hill?" And as soon as he thought of doing it he began to carry out the idea. He leaned his shoulder against the rock and pushed with all his might. All at once the rock gave way, and in a moment it was rolling down hill and Jock was looking after it as if he had never expected that this would happen at all. When it reached the bottom of the hill it struck against another large rock and broke into a thousand pieces.

"It must have been a pretty soft stone," said Jock. "I think I'll go down and see what happened to it."

So he trotted down the hill and found the rock all shattered in a thousand bits. In the midst of the pieces of stone he found a little golden key, just as if it had been imbedded in the rock and had been released when the rock was broken.

"Hello," said Jock; "this key must fit something. I wonder what it is." He looked around at the landscape, but he could see nothing that looked as if it might open with a key, and so he slowly walked up the hill with the key in his hand. When he reached the place where the rock had stood he was astonished to see what looked like a little trap-door. The rock had covered it before. The little trap-door had a lock, and the golden key just fitted the lock; as Jock soon found out.

When the door was opened Jock saw a flight of stone steps leading down into the heart of the hill. It was all dark inside and Jock took quite awhile to find out that his curiosity was greater than his fear. He descended the stone steps for quite a distance and then suddenly found he had reached another door. He felt about for a handle, found one, turned it and stepped out in a lighted room.

"Hello!" said a voice beside him. Jock turned in amazement and saw a little man about three feet high who looked as surprised as he was himself.

"There!" said the little man. "I don't understand it. It's mysterious!"

"Isn't it?" said Jock. "I don't understand it either."

"Don't you?" said the little old man. "Then that makes it queerer than ever!"

"What I mean is I don't understand how you ever got here," said Jock.

"And what puzzles me is how you ever got here," said the little old man. "And if you could get in I'd like to know why I can't get out."

"Oh, if that's all, I can take you out," said Jock, and he opened the door and started up the stairs. But to his great astonishment he found that the little door at the top of the stairs was closed again, and no amount of pushing would open it.

"I was afraid so," sighed the little old man when Jock had come down again. "I was imprisoned here years and years ago by a magician and I've been trying all this time to get out. He must have come along just after you came and locked us in again."

"Well, that's a nice idea!" said Jock.

"Isn't it?" said the little old man. "And I've been trying for years and years to think of a way out and I haven't succeeded yet."

In the meanwhile, what do you think was happening outside? The wizard himself, who had been magically summoned by the breaking of the rock, was sitting on the door (that was why Jock could not open it) and reciting all sorts of magic incantations to make the rock at the foot of the hill come together again. In a little while the pieces melted together just as if they had been dough, and then the rock hardened and was just as good as ever. What do you suppose he made it do after that? He recited more furious incantations and made the rock roll right up the hill and rest beside him. He didn't dare go down and push it up for fear the little man and Jock (whom he had seen enter) would get out in the meantime. When the rock was close beside him the wizard jumped up and went around on the other side to push it into place. But just at that instant, when the wizard was behind the big rock and could not see what was happening the door quietly opened, and Jock and the little old man slipped out. They crouched low so that the wizard could not see them as he rolled the rock over the little door with a few more incantations.

"Now they're safely caught," said the wizard, "and I needn't bother with them any more." And he flew off like a cloud of black smoke. Jock and the little old man danced gleefully around the rock. "It's lucky we heard him reciting incantations," said Jock, "and were all ready to jump out the minute he left. Now let's go home."

So they did, and the little old man lived in the village and was always popular, and Jock always kept the little golden key, which he had put in his pocket, to show people when he told about his adventure under the rocking rock.

* * *

FOUR KITTENS.

There were once four kittens named Topsy, Flopsy, Sallykins and Sue. Topsy was black, Flopsy was white, Sallykins was yellow and Sue was gray, and they were all just as good as gold. One morning their mother said to them, "I am going shopping. You be good kittens and don't go outside the basket." And she pushed the cover down over the basket and left them by themselves. It was rather dark inside the basket, for the light only came through the chinks in the straw, and so, as there was nothing else to do, the four little kittens cuddled up and went fast asleep.

While they were asleep and as good as gold, who should come by but the farmer's son, who seeing a basket with a cover to it, thought, "How comfortable that would be for me to take fishing with me to bring home my fish in." So he picked it up and carried it off to the woods with him, with the kittens still fast asleep inside. There he set it down on a sunny bank and began fishing. Before long he caught a speckled trout, which he took off the hook and threw into the basket.

Now, if you were a kitten and had gone to sleep in a peaceful basket as your mother had told you to and some one threw a live, cold, flapping trout in, shouldn't you be scared? Well, Topsy and Flopsy and Sallykins and Sue were scared, I can tell you, and out of the basket they jumped, one after another, and ran away as fast as they could in all directions. The farmer's son was much astonished when he found that the basket he had brought with him belonged to the kittens, and so he ran after them and tried to catch them and bring them back home where they belonged. The harder he ran the more frightened the kittens became, and they scampered and dodged and hid behind the tree trunks and among the dried leaves till the farmer's son got discouraged and went back to his fishing. For a long time after the sound of his footsteps had died away the kittens remained close in their hiding-places, but at last they plucked up courage to venture out and to pick their way cautiously among the dry leaves.

With soft little mews they called to each other till they were all together again, but even so they were somewhat frightened, for the woods were large and strange, and they were afraid that the boy-creature would chase them again.

At first they thought they would try to find their way home, but after wandering a little way in every direction they gave up the task as hopeless.

"We shall never be able to find our way out," said Topsy.

"We must stay here forever," said Flopsy.

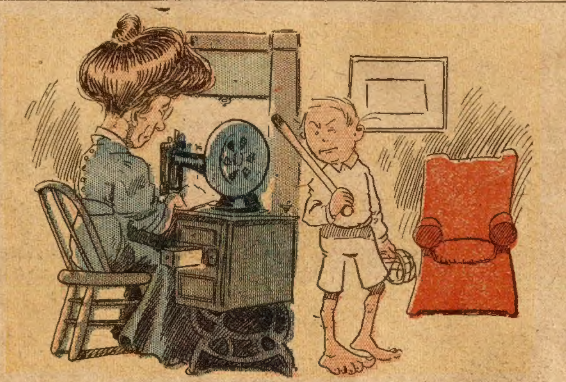
"What shall we do next?" said Sallykins.

"Let's build a house to live in," said Sue.

That seemed to be the only thing to be done and so they selected a pile of dried leaves in the shade of a great oak and scooped out a hollow in them which made a comfortable nest, in which they all cuddled down and fell fast asleep and dreamed they were at home in their own basket again.

When the mother cat came home from her shopping and found not only the kittens but the basket gone, she was a much distressed cat. She could understand why the kittens should run away, but not the basket, and she immediately set out to find them. She ran all over the barn, calling. Then she ran to the house, but she got no answer there. She went up the road and down the road without success. At last she took the path through the woods, and there on a sunny bank by the side of the trout stream she saw the basket. She ran to it and threw back the cover, but what was her disgust to find inside instead of four nice, warm kittens, half a dozen horrid, cold trout. Although she was fond of fish as a rule she was not at all glad to see them this time. However, she reflected that if the basket was here the kittens could not be far off, and so she set about exploring the woods with renewed energy. Before long she came upon a black kitten and a white kitten and a yellow kitten and a gray kitten, fast asleep in a pile of dried leaves. With a joyful mew she sprang in among them, and the kittens opened their eyes sleepily and wondered where they were and were glad to see her again.

Then she led them back through the woods to where the basket lay. The farmer's boy, when he saw the cat with the string of kittens after her, understood that they were the rightful owners of the basket, and so he took the fish out, and the cat and the four kittens all jumped in. Then he tied the fish together with a string and carried them with one hand and took the basket in the other, and in this way he brought them all home again. That night he gave the cat and the kittens some of the fish for dinner.



Mamma—Don't play with naughty Frankie; why don't you play with that good little boy?

Sonny—That good little boy's baseball mask doesn't fit me like Frankie's.

The Swimming Hole.

Cleanliness may be next to godliness in the calendar of virtues, but it has its proper place, as two boys found out down East. They were at a New Hampshire summer resort in the hills. They wanted to go swimming, but there was no place where they could swim except the reservoir that supplies drinking water to the town, and the hard-hearted workmen at the reservoir would not let them swim there. A small stream of water came tumbling down the mountain, but it was too shallow for swimming. It had its possibilities, however, as the two boys saw, and they set to work at the development of this natural resource, as the wise men would say. They went out to the mountain every morning with shovels, and they worked away all day. They did not tell anybody what was going on. Then one day the water stopped running into the reservoir. This was a serious thing, because the people in the valley didn't have enough wells to get water from. So the men at the reservoir went on a hunt for the trouble, and there in the woods on the mountainside, they found a fine new dam built of logs and stones and earth, and behind it in the pool that was already deepening were the two boys, swimming in their own swimming hole. They did not stay in long when the investigators shouted to them from the bank, and the dam was broken through in a minutes by the workmen. The boys went sadly down the mountain, and after that they went swimming in a shower bath.

* * *

The little green apple is ripe for mischief.

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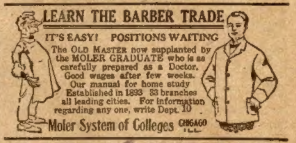

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THE STRAY HORSE.

"There's a stray horse in the garden!" shrieked Mrs. Turnover. "Hurry and drive it out or it will ruin everything!"

"What sort of a horse is it?" inquired Turnover, calmly, looking up from his book.

"What's the difference what kind of horse it is?" asked Mrs. Turnover. "Do hurry and drive the brute away. I can't leave the house for a minute, or I would not ask you."

"Your remarks are characteristic of womankind," commented Turnover. "You see a horse in the garden, but you can't say whether it's a bay or a sorrel; whether it has a blazed face or a glass eye. A woman will take notice of a new hat half a mile away and she can describe a gown to the minutest detail six months after seeing it, but she has absolutely no eye for the ordinary things of life. She seems lacking in the faculty of observation, which, when combined with a talent for analysis and deduction, is invaluable.

"This admirable book that I am reading—or trying to read, between interruptions—has for its hero the master sleuth, Hawkshaw Hemingway. It's an education in itself to follow him as he unravels mystery after mystery. Seven guests are slain in their beds in a large hotel, their heads having been cut off with a handsaw while they slept. The police are called in and they fuss around in the usual fatuous, boneheaded way, without making any progress. They cannot find a single clew.

"Then Hawkshaw Hemingway is called in. He gets down on his knees and looks at the carpet through a pocket telescope and finds a brass suspender button. What can a man deduce from a brass suspender button? It seems a hopeless clew, yet it was all that marvelous man needed to clear up the mystery. In half an hour he had the criminal under arrest and was considering offers from a lyceum bureau to deliver a series of lectures. I tell you——"

"Oh, mercy!" cried Mrs. Turnover, who was at the window wringing her hands. "That horse is tramping the asparagus bed all to destruction. Do go and drive it away, if you never do another stroke of work as long and you live! And the asparagus was doing so well!"

"That remark deserves to be classed with the popular fiction of the day," said Turnover, as he leisurely arose from his chair and stretched himself. "I'll drive that horse away in good season, my dear, since you insist upon it, but not until it has done its worst to that asparagus bed. I'm sick and tired of the asparagus bed, and I'll be glad to see it reduced to a pulp. Three years ago your venerable aunt came to our lowly abode with some asparagus roots in a basket and presented them to us with a lot of grandstand work. Had she been giving us a clear title to King Solomon's mines she couldn't have made a greater fuss. A man would have thought, while listening to her, that asparagus roots are the only things necessary to round out human happiness.

"You fell for it, and fairly went into raptures over the gift. I had to leave my cherished books and go out and spade the garden and plant those absurd roots, and then I had no peace until I had watered that bed, and pulled the weeds out of it, and grubbed around on my hands and knees every evening, trying to catch moles and grasshoppers that threatened your sacred asparagus. For three long years I have been wrestling with that bed and we've never had ten cents' worth of asparagus from it. And the little we did have tasted like shoestrings and I never ate it without calling down maledictions upon your aunt.

"Nothing could please me better than to see the asparagus bed ruined by an accommodating horse, and if I can locate the owner of the animal I'll call on him and give him a box of cigars. But where are you going?"

"To drive that beast out of the garden, even if my cake is spoiled," replied Mrs. Turnover.

* * *

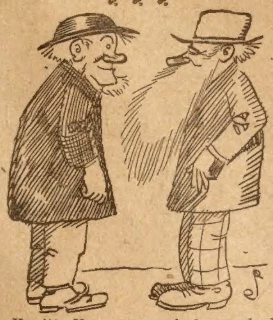
Browntails.

Edward Spanhoofd, teacher in St. Paul's school, Concord, N. H., has got the Boy Scouts interested in clearing and conquering brown-tail-moths. He is accomplishing a double purpose. First, the Boy Scouts are proving of help to the community. Secondly, they are being trained in thrift because they are making money by the work.

The boys get paid $1 for every thousand nests of the moths that they gather, the insects being destroyed. Prominent citizens of Concord who are interested in forestry gladly have furnished the money to pay the boys and already many thousands of the moths' nests have been destroyed.

The price of $1 for 1,000 nests was found by experience just sufficient to stimulate the school children to do their work with effective enthusiasm.

* * *



Hewitt—Has your son had a good education?

Jewett—Well, I took him out of college before he had entirely forgotten how to spell.

* * *

Backward America.

This is the only country in the world, according to Charles P. Neill, U. S. Commissioner of Labor, where an appeal for help has to be made following an industrial disaster. All countries where there is industrial advancement such as we enjoy have the necessary machinery to provide for the victims without an appeal to charity. The fund of $80,000 raised for the relatives of the recent factory fire in New York, while it does credit to the charitable inclination of the citizens of New York, is an indictment of the maladjustment of our social system.

* * *

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The Easy Wringer Mop [Patented] Hands do not touch the water

Think Of It

A Self wringing Mop. Two turns of the crank wrings out every drop of water. Moping is now a pleasure.

SisterWoman!

READ MY FREE OFFER

My Mission is to make sick women well, and I want to send **you, your daughter, your sister, your mother,** or **any ailing friend,** a full 50-cent box of Balm of Figs Compound **absolutely free.** It is a remedy for the treatment of **woman's ailments,** and I want to tell you **all about it**—just how to use it yourself—right **at home** without any inconvenience—and the best of it is that it will not in the least interfere with your work or pleasure. Balm of Figs Compound is a remedy that has made sick women well and weak women strong, and I can prove it—**let me prove it to you,** and I will gladly do it, for I have never heard of anything that has, according to the abundance of testimonials at hand, so **quickly** and **surely** cured woman's ailments. No internal dosing necessary—it is a local treatment, yet it has to its credit some of the most extraordinary cures on record. Therefore, I want to place it in the hands of every woman suffering with **any form of Leucorrhea, Painful Periods, Ulceration, Inflammation, Uterine Displacements: Ovarian or Uterine Tumors or Growths,** or any of the weaknesses so common to women.

This 50c box of Balm of Figs Compound will not cost you one cent

I will send it to you **absolutely free,** to prove to you its splendid qualities, and then if you wish to continue further, it will cost you only a few cents a week. I do not believe there is another remedy equal to Balm of Figs Compound, and I am willing to **prove** my faith by sending out these **50-cent boxes** free. So, dear reader, irrespective of your past experience, write to me **at once — today** — and I will send you the treatment **entirely free** by return mail, and if you so desire, I can readily refer you to many, who can personally testify to the great and lasting cures that have resulted from the use of this remedy. But after all, the **very best test** of anything is **a personal trial** of it, and I know a 50-cent box of Balm of Figs Comcound will **convince you** of its merits. Nothing is so **convincing** as the **actual test** of the article itself. Will **you** give Balm of Figs Compound this test? Write to me today, and remember I will gladly send you a **50-cent box of this remedy absolutely free.** Address,

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It is also called SALT RHEUM, SCALD HEAD, TETTER, ITCH, WEEPING SKIN, MILK CRUST, PRURITUS—these are different names, but all mean one thing—ECZEMA.

DR. J. E. CANNADAY, THE DOCTOR WHO TREATS NOTHING BUT ECZEMA.

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Just to show you that you need my treatment. It is yours for the asking. If you have been to other Doctors, if you have taken patent medicine, and used lotions and salves till you are disgusted, write to me—I will send you ABSOLUTELY FREE OF CHARGE, A TRIAL TREATMENT. There are no strings to this statement. There is not one cent to pay—not a penny accepted. I know what my trial treatment will do; I know that it will convince you more than anything else on earth that you need my treatment.

Don't Miss This Chance for a Cure

If you are SUFFERING FROM ECZEMA you can only be cured one way—REMOVE THE CAUSE. What is the cause? ACID IN THE BLOOD. How do you remove it? By cleansing the blood of the ACID.

My treatment is soothing—relieves the dreadful itching at once and cures the disease quickly. You don't have to take treatment for months and months. ONLY ONE CASE IN TEN needs the second treatment—ONE IN FIFTY needs the third—think of that!

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Eczema is a disease of the blood and affects all parts of the body—the face, lips, ears, hands, feet, genital organ, etc.

SYMPTOMS.—Yellowish red eruption; the pimples or patches may swell and the itching is so great the person will scratch the top off, then they bleed and dark scales form; there is an oozing of matter. In some the skin cracks and bleeds. Itching is terrible; a person suffering will scratch till they bleed. Scales form on parts of the body, where the clothing comes in contact.

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I positively Guarantee that every case cured by me will stay cured 10 YEARS! It must be good or it could not be sold this way.

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Is the most complete book ever sent out. I explain every form of the disease plainly and fully. I show pictures of many severe cases, which are extremely interesting. I send you names of thousands who have been cured and are grateful.

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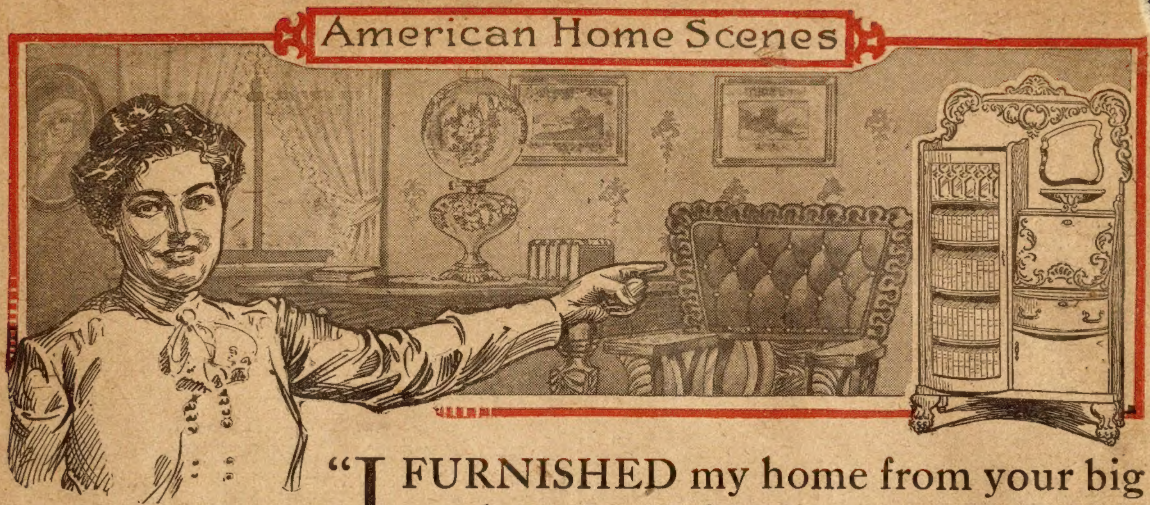

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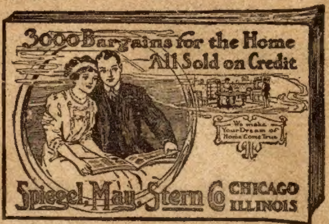
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